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A

NARRATIVE

OF A

VISIT TO THE COURT OF SINDE;

A

SKETCH

OF THE

HISTORY OF CUTCH,

FROM ITS FIRST CONNEXION WITH THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT IN INDIA TILL THE CONCLUSION OF THE TREATY OF 1819;

AND SOME

REMARKS ON THE MEDICAL TOPOGRAPHY OF BHOOJ.

By JAMES BURNES, M. D., F. R. S.

OF THE BOMBAY MEDICAL STAFF;

FELLOW OF THE ROYAL COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS OF EDINBURGH, &c.

Presented by his Excellency Major-General Sir John Malcolm, G. C. B., Governor in Council, to the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society.

BOMBAY, 1830.

PRINTED AT THE EXPENCE, AND UNDER THE AUTHORITY, OF GOVERNMENT.

OF CONGRESS
CITY OF WASHINGTON

EDINBURGH:

PUBLISHED BY ROBERT CADELL;

AND WHITTAKER, TREACHER, & ARNOT, LONDON.

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VISIT

TO THE

COURT OF SINDE.

SINDE.

A
SKETCH
of the
RUNN
and Countries adjacent
to illustrate a
Memoir on its formation, and
the alterations of the
Eastern Branch of the Indus,
by
Lieut. Burnes, Asst. Qr. Mr. Genl.

The Thurr
or
Little Desert.

Nuggur.

Parkur.

Nucyur.

The Jattee.

THE GRAND RUNN.

Supposed original course of the Loonee River.

Attached to the Mainland before the Earthquake of 1819.

Thrown up by the Earthquake of 1819.

Covered with Water since the Earthquake of 1819.

Old Bund.

Ullah Bund.

Puchum.

Khureer.

The Bunnee.

A tract of Grass Land.

BHOOJ.

Anjar.

Mandivee.

Moondra.

Kattywar.

RUNN.

Mentioned by Abul Fuzzul.

Supposed original course of the Bunnee River.

Middle of the Bunnee.

The Bunnee River

GULF OF CUTCH.

Back Water.

Scale in British Miles.

10 20 40

W. Ballantine 14th. Edin.r 1831.

69 70 71

24. 23.

(To face Page 145)

EXPLANATORY OBSERVATIONS

RELATIVE TO THE

MAP OF SINDE.

I HAVE carefully examined all the maps of Sinde in common circulation, but have found none so generally correct as the one from which the prefixed, as far as it relates to that country, has been partly compiled. It was sent to me while on my route to Hyderabad, by my brother, who had copied it from "A Sketch of the Indus from Shikarpoor to the Sea, by Samuel Richards, 1810," in the Quarter-Master General's Office, Bombay; a delineation which must have been constructed, I think, from native information. I have made a few additions to it, as well as some alterations, which are, I believe, very nearly correct; although, as I

had not even a compass with me, and could judge of distances only from doubtful information, and the time occupied in passing from one station to another, it cannot be considered entitled to the same credit as a map constructed on mathematical principles. While I say this, however, I am free to express my conviction, from personal observation, that it is a truer delineation of Sinde, and its grand feature the Indus, than any which has hitherto been published in Europe.

There are many serious objections to a map of a country like Sinde ever being critically correct. Some of these will be noticed in the course of my narrative; and I may remark here, in addition, that the inconstancy of the Indus itself is an insurmountable obstacle to any thing like accuracy in the representation of that river.

These observations, however, apply only to the sketch of Sinde. The delineation of Cutch, the Bunnee, the Northern Runn, Puchum Island, the Koree river, &c. will be found strictly correct; being, in fact, a reduced copy of a map compiled from actual measurement and observation by my brother Lieutenant Alexander Burnes, assistant quarter-master-general of the army, and intended to illustrate that officer's memoir on the eastern mouth of the Indus and the formation of the Runn.

The dominions of the Ameers of Sinde extend from the district of Shikarpoor on the frontier of Cabûl, and the island of Bukkor in the Indus, along

the level plain, watered by that river, to the sea; a space of about two hundred and fifty miles. Their general boundaries are the British principality of Cutch, and the Indian Ocean to the south; the kingdom of Jessulmere and the Registah, or Sandy Desert, to the east; the mountains of Belochistan on the west; and the provinces of Seewistan and Bahawulpoor on the north. The Indus traverses the country in a direction nearly diagonal; fertilizing the soil in its course, but, like the Nile, often proving pernicious to those who dwell on its banks, by the swamps which its annual inundations create. The temperature in the summer months is high, and proportionally low in the winter season. While I was in Hyderabad in January 1828, rain fell in torrents for many days, attended with a sensation of more piercing cold than I had ever experienced even in Europe.

The capital of Sinde is Hyderabad, situated about 130 miles from the sea, on the eastern side of the river. Its population may be estimated at 20,000 souls; and that of Tatta, the only other city of note in the province, at 40,000.

INTRODUCTORY LETTER.

Bhooj Residency, 10*th June* 1828.

To the Resident in Cutch,

Sir,—I have the honour to submit to you some observations on my late visit to Sinde, together with a few remarks, which may probably be considered of importance, on the actual government of that country. As I have had an opportunity, which no European officer ever before enjoyed, of being intimately acquainted with their Highnesses the Ameers, and as I was at some pains, during my residence at their capital, to ascertain their characters and habits, I am not without the hope of bringing to the notice of government some new and interesting particulars regarding the singularly-constituted court of Hyderabad.

I was indeed allowed little leisure for writing while in Sinde; and as I left that country under an impression that I should immediately return to it, I was less minute in my inquiries than I would have otherwise been; though I had nevertheless collected a small stock of information, which I flattered myself might be of some importance to government. Since my return to Cutch, however, I have had an opportunity, through your kindness, of perusing several documents on the subject of Sinde, and I have been surprised to find, that most of the

matter relative to its history, resources, &c. which I proposed to communicate as new, is already on record, in a form which I have no expectation of equalling, in the various reports of Messrs Crow, Seton, and Ellis, and also in Pottinger's Travels in Belochistan.

Under these circumstances, I fear that little more remains for me than to give a mere personal narrative of my proceedings. But, even in pursuing this apparently easy course, I shall encounter some difficulty. An official form is certainly not the best suited for detailing the impressions made upon my mind, by the scenes through which I passed ; nor ought these probably to constitute the subject of the following pages. Still as government, by their letter of the 23d April last, have left the nature of my report in a great measure to myself, I must rely on the kind consideration of the Honourable the Governor, to pardon the introduction of matter, which, although unnecessary in a public point of view, may not, I hope, be devoid of interest to himself and his colleagues.—I have the honour to be, &c.

JAMES BURNES.

This letter originally formed part of the narrative, but has been detached from it, in order to divest the paper as much as possible of its official shape ; and, for the same reason, the numbers of the paragraphs have been omitted.

NARRATIVE OF A VISIT

TO THE

COURT OF SINDE.

EVER since the final occupation of Cutch by the British troops in 1819, our government has been brought in close connection with Sinde, and attempts have been made on our part to cultivate an amicable intercourse with the Ameers. But these haughty and jealous chieftains, who, from the first, had viewed the extension of our Empire in this direction with distrust and apprehension, uniformly maintained a cold and unfriendly attitude towards us. Treaties had been entered into, but without any feeling of cordiality on their part; no European officer was allowed to cross the frontier from Cutch; and even an envoy, who had proceeded from Bombay to Sinde, in 1820, on the invitation of their own minister, was coolly received at their court, and abused after he left it.

It had been an object of policy to avoid a war with the Ameers; but the British government had, nevertheless, been forced on two occasions, one so late as 1825, to assemble large bodies of troops in Cutch, in order to awe them into the maintenance of treaties, and to prevent their taking advantage of our being engaged in the Bhurtpore and Burmese operations, in order to invade our territories or those of our allies. It is scarcely to be doubted that the court of Hyderabad gave protection and support to the Meeanah plunderers who infested and devastated Cutch in 1825; and, indeed, every thing led to the impression, that it was the terror of our power alone which had prevented the Ameers from openly declaring war against us, and that they had no wish whatever to keep up friendly relations with us. Their distrust and jealousy were understood to extend equally to the government and its European servants; and nothing appeared more improbable than that a British officer should be invited, on any pretence whatever, to visit Sinde.

In this state of affairs, considerable surprise was excited, when, on the 23d of October last, a letter of the most friendly nature was received from the Ameers by the Resident in Cutch, requesting that I should be permitted to proceed without delay to Hyderabad on account of the alleged sickness of Meer Mourad Ali, one of the principal chiefs. As private reports did not represent the disease of his Highness as dangerous, it was now our turn

to be suspicious; and many and various were the surmises formed as to the real object of the request. Some maintained, that, as peace had been restored in India, by the fall of Bhurtpore, and the termination of the Burmese war, and as the Russians had entered Persia, the Ameers had taken this mode of prudently making friendly advances to our government. Few gave them credit for sincerity in the reason assigned; and several of my friends were strongly of opinion that I ought not to venture into Sinde without some specific assurance of protection.

For my own part, I had ever felt a feverish anxiety to cross the forbidden frontier, and particularly to view the classic river Indus. Nothing could, therefore, be more satisfactory to me than the invitation; and, without considering whether the undertaking involved danger or not, I prepared to enter upon it with the best possible spirits and without a moment's delay. My arrangements were soon completed; and, on the evening of the 25th, I commenced my march, accompanied by the Sindian vakeel or agent at Bhooj whom the Ameers had ordered to attend me, together with an escort composed of a small detachment of the 21st regiment of native infantry, a few troopers of the Poonah auxiliary horse, and about a dozen horsemen in the service of his Highness the Rao of Cutch. The Sipahis * were the picked men of the

* *Vulgo*, Sepoys.

Bhooj brigade, who had been selected for their size and appearance, and they attracted much notice and admiration during my stay in Sinde.

It was not long until I discovered that my attendant, the vakeel, had been placed near me by his suspicious masters to gain a knowledge of my temper and proceedings. I took my measures accordingly; but in the journey afterwards, he was ever in the way to prevent my obtaining correct information, and on more than one occasion, I found that he had even deceived me. He was a supple and deceitful Hindoo, named Gopaldass; one of the few of his religion, who still exercise a little influence at the intolerant Court of Sinde, from their being more patient and expert in political intrigue than the Mahommedans. He had so far gained the confidence of his masters, as to be deemed worthy of being employed to watch the motions of the vizier of Cabûl, and had acquired, in that theatre of oriental diplomacy, a competent knowledge of the arts of dissimulation and falsehood. Soon after my arrival at Hyderabad, I was under the necessity of forbidding him my presence; having found that he repeated with exaggeration whatever fell from me to the Ameers and their minister, Meer Ismael Shah.

On my arrival at Luckput, on the 28th, I gave orders for the immediate embarkation of my baggage, and was much surprised when he informed me that he durst not cross with me into Sinde

without another express order from Hyderabad. It was in vain that I threatened to return instantly to Bhooj, and pointed out to him the responsibility he incurred, by insulting the British government in detaining me after so pressing an invitation from the Ameers. He declared that it would cost him his life should he venture to take another step; and at last confessed, that he had not even communicated to his court, the fact of my having consented to accompany him, from a fear, as he affirmed, that I might change my mind, and bring down ruin and disgrace upon himself. Nothing could exceed my chagrin at this communication; but as it was evident the Ameers were not in fault, I deemed it prudent quietly to await the return of a messenger whom he despatched.

The city of Luckput is a large fort of an irregular polygonal shape, two miles and a-half in circumference, situated on a gravelly ridge at the western extremity of Cutch, on the bank of the Koree river, or eastern branch of the Indus, into which the tide flows, and which is navigable for boats of considerable size, as far up as the town. It was founded by Rao Gore, about seventy years ago, and derives its name from the great-great-grandfather of the present prince of Cutch. It was an open paltry village till the beginning of this century, when it was fortified by Futteh Mahommed, the renowned vizier or jemidar, whose discerning eye discovered in it a highly favourable

situation, as well for advancing the commerce of his own country as for repressing the encroaching power of Sinde, and who used every exertion to make it a large and populous city. The inhabitants, however, do not at present exceed 6000 souls; consisting chiefly of mercantile speculators from other countries, and the families of Hindoos who have been driven from Sinde by the intolerance of the Mahommedan faith. The walls have suffered less from the earthquake of 1819 than those of most towns in Cutch, and are at present in a state of good repair; but the houses of the inhabitants, which occupy only about a third of the area inside, are much dilapidated, and of a mean description.

Futteh Mahommed, who has just been mentioned, deserves a passing notice. He was a Mussulman of Sindian extraction, who, from the humble station of shepherd, raised himself to the supreme rule in Cutch, about the year 1788; and enjoyed a greater degree of fame and respect, both at home and abroad, than any legitimate prince who had ever sat on its throne. At the confused period when this Cutchee Cromwell appeared, the country was groaning under the tyranny of Rao Rahiden, a monster, who, having apostatized to the Moslem creed, determined to spread it by the sword throughout his dominions, and deluged Bhooj with blood; it being his usual practice to parade the streets with a body of negroes, putting to death every human being he met, whom scruples

or fear prevented exclaiming, Allah Akber. He was at length imprisoned as a lunatic, through the address and bravery of Futteh Mahommed, who, being hailed as a deliverer, restored the province to tranquillity, by a firm and judicious exercise of authority; and continued to wield its resources for many years, during which he often displayed views of policy, and traits of generosity and courage, which would have done honour to an European sovereign. A revolution in 1801 having thrown him from his high station, his energy enabled him speedily to recover the ascendency; but his renewed sway soon betrayed an altered temper, and less worthy motives; for, soured by the misfortunes and ingratitude he had experienced, he became the merciless persecutor of his private enemies, and the ruthless scourge of the unhappy people he had so long cherished.

Futteh Mahommed, nevertheless, bears the only name in the history of Cutch on which the mind can dwell with a feeling of reverence. Living at a period when the country was a scene of dissention, and exposed as a prey to any daring adventurer, the superiority of his mind enabled him to seize the government; and he was well qualified to reduce it to order. His actions speak for themselves. In prosperity, and during the first ten years of his administration, he was prudent and just, and the popular voice was unanimous in his praise. Adversity effected a complete transformation in his

character; and his subsequent actions, which his friends attempted to palliate on the plea of necessity, evince how readily he forsook his maxims of moderation, and how little he regarded the reputation he had gained. But if we take into consideration the place where he passed his early life, and the bloody examples which were daily before his eyes, we cease to wonder at his excesses, and are only surprised at the virtue and self-denial, which, amidst the greatest temptation, he had so long maintained. He was the chief whom Colonel Walker endeavoured to interest in his philanthropic but abortive scheme of abolishing infanticide, and who, in answer to that gentleman's expostulations, retorted with a disquisition on the divine origin of this inhuman practice. That he disapproved of it, however, may be fairly inferred from his comparatively enlightened sentiments in other respects; and that he did not put it down by force, must be pardoned on the same principle that we excuse ourselves for permitting Suttee cremations. He died so late as 1813, leaving his power to his two eldest sons; who, however, were unable to retain it.

The immediate neighbourhood of Luckput is a parched, deserted, and unproductive country, of the most uninteresting appearance; which has evidently, at no remote period, been under water, as is clear from the abundance of decayed shells and other marine productions. With the exception of

one or two small gardens under the walls, there is no cultivation within two leagues of the town. A few miles distant, at the foot of the nearest hills to the south east, are the ruins of an ancient city, called Wagum Chaora Ka Ghud, which, I believe, have not been mentioned by any preceding writer. It is supposed to have flourished about nine centuries ago, and must have belonged to the Chaora Rajpoots, who then occupied this part of the country. The stones of which Luckput is built have been taken chiefly from the remains of the city.

Before passing into Sinde, it may not be amiss to take a brief review of the history of that country, and of the revolutions which raised the present rulers to power.

From the days of Alexander the Great to the birth of Mahommed, a period of nine hundred years, little light is thrown on the history of Sinde; which is known at both these epochs, and during the reign of the Greek monarchs of Bactria, to have been governed by Hindoo Rajahs. But the rapid progress of Islamism, together with the sudden rise of the empire of the Saracens, produced a new era in the annals of this, as in those of many other nations; and so early as the 20th year of the Hejira, the fertile regions watered by the Indus had attracted the attention of the Caliph Omar, who, after founding the city of Bussora on

the Euphrates, despatched an expedition from Bahrein in the Persian Gulf, in order to reduce them under his authority ; but the attempt proved unsuccessful. Towards the close of the same century, however, while the enthusiastic soldiers of the Mahommedan faith were engaged in subduing Spain on the one side, and Samarcand on the other, a zeal to propagate the " religion of God and his apostle" among the Pagan Hindoos, inflamed as usual by a thirst of glory and dominion, but alloyed in this instance with the less noble motive of procuring female slaves for the seraglio of the commander of the faithful, induced Hediaz ben Yousuf, the lieutenant of the Oommiade Caliph Walid in Sejestan and Candahar, to detach one of his generals, Mahommed Cossim, to extend the power of their sovereign towards India, and Sinde flourished under the protection of the vicegerents of the prophet, successively in Syria and at Bagdad, till 391, the date of its conquest by Sooltan of Ghizni.*

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* The history of Sinde may be faintly traced to a more remote period than that mentioned in the text ; for we are told that, two hundred years before the time of Alexander, the Persian Empire had extended itself to that country, under the reign of Darius Hystaspes, whose admiral, Scylax, a Greek, descended the Indus to the sea, and imposed a tribute upon the nations on its banks ; to enforce the payment of which, some writers assert, was one of the objects of the Macedonian expedition. The Hindoo Prince who reigned in Sinde, at the time of Mahommed Cossim's invasion, was

The revolution which conveyed the ensigns of royalty from the feeble hands of this conqueror's descendants, relieved it for a moment from a foreign yoke, and encouraged the Soomras, a great native tribe in which the local government was vested, to make an effort for independence; but they were soon vanquished by the victorious arms of Mahommed Ghori, whose successor, the enterprizing Altimush, proclaimed himself the lord paramount of Sinde in the year 612. Now annexed to Delhi, the province remained a fief of that crown for two centuries, during which the Soomras became extinct, and their authority passed into the family of Summa, then settled upon the confines of Muckran, whose traditions claim for it a genealogy from the downfal of Babylon; while Hindoo branches, derived probably from members of this family, who fled before the first Mahommedan invaders of India, are still to be found in the Rao of Cutch, and the Rajpoot Jarejas of that country and Kattiwar. In the confusion occasioned by the dreadful irruption of Tamerlane, this dynasty threw off its allegiance; and its members continued to reign under the designation of Jams, sometimes as vassals, but

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Dahir, the son of Chuch, a Brahmin, who had raised himself to the throne by a marriage with the widow of the last Rajpoot sovereign, and whose history is fully recorded in a Persian work named after him, "The Chuch Nameh," of which I brought an abstract with me from Hyderdabad.

often uncontrolled, through a succession of several generations, till their power was entirely annihilated by the elevation of the celebrated Baber to the throne.

On the distribution of the Mogul realms into Soobahs or divisions in the time of Akber, Sinde was attached to Mooltan, but was occasionally ruled by separate viceroys, nominated by the court of Hindostan, till the invasion of Nadir Shah, when it was ceded to Persia by virtue of the treaty concluded between that monarch and the emperor Mahommed the Second; who, to use the polished terms of the instrument itself, "in consideration of an affection stronger than father ever showed to son, or brother to brother," dismembered to his conqueror, as a peace-offering, all the territories bordering on the Indus which were then deemed worthy of his acceptance. This arrangement concluded, Nadir Shah visited Tatta; but his assassination, which occurred soon after at Meshed, in Khorassan, having left a field open for the ambitious schemes of his general, Ahmed Khan Seedozy, that aspiring chief declared himself king of Cabûl, and laid the foundation of the Douranee empire, to which Sinde after a time submitted, and has ever since been considered subordinate.

The house of Calora claimed a lineage from the princely blood of Abbas, the uncle of the prophet; but its greatness in Sinde is traced to Adam Shah, a native of Belochistan, who gained a high influ-

ence from the reputed sanctity of his character, and as the chosen disciple and delegate of a famous Mahommedan preacher, in the middle of the fifteenth century * of our era, and whose descendants, inheriting the holiness of their ancestor, succeeded to his spiritual power, and were revered as saints, till about 1705, when they were honoured with a title and a jaghire, by the great Aurungzebe. With temporal rank thus added to religious veneration, the grandeur of the family rapidly increased; and in a few years their glory reached its zenith by the issue of a firmaun under the emperor's signet, installing their representative in the viceregal government of Tatta.

The patent for this investiture was granted about 1735, in the person of Meean Noor Mahommed, † who may be styled the flower of the race,

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* It is rather a singular coincidence, that, at this very period, (the middle of the fifteenth century,) should have appeared the two religious leaders, who have exerted so much political influence on the countries bordering on the Indus; namely, Adam Shah, the head of the Caloras, and Nanna, the founder of the Sikhs now so formidable.

† "In the person of Meer Noor Mahommed, the authority which was at first an usurpation of itinerants, became legitimated, and the descendants of a mendicant elevated to the government of Sinde. The stock, however, was held in holy veneration; religious prejudice, therefore, combined with worldly power to awe the public mind, and many features of the country at the present day, mark the impression of the double influence."—Crow.

and who, on transferring his fealty to Persia, agreeably to the treaty of Delhi, contrived, by address and solicitation, to obtain from Nadir Shah a confirmation of its privileges, which he enjoyed during his lifetime, and bequeathed to his posterity at his death. When this event took place, Ahmed Shah had seated himself firmly on the Affghaun throne, and in order to regulate the payment of his tribute from Sinde, was advancing into Sewistan. One of the first to offer him homage was Mourad Yab Khan, the eldest son of Meean Noor Mahommed, who had been raised to the musnud by the suffrages of the grandees, and whose dignity the king was at first pleased to ratify; but, having proved himself unworthy of the trust, he was deposed, and his honours devolved on one of his younger brothers, Meean Gholam Shah, who, after a struggle for the supremacy, at length boldly seized the reins of government, and commenced an active administration, though not unchequered by reverses, of fifteen years.

Civil dissension being at an end, he led in person two expeditions against the "infidels of Cutch," and defeated the Rao's troops at the great battle of Jarrah, memorable for the barbarity of the Rajpoots, who, seeing victory hopeless, turned their swords against their own women and children, to prevent their falling into the hands of the invaders, and where, as the historians of the country allege, a hundred thousand corpses strewed the

field. Such bloodshed might have satisfied the triumph, and glutted the revenge of the most inveterate enemy; but it was not sufficient for Gholam Shah, who, disappointed in the hope of adding a province to his dominions, and enraged at the obstinate valour of a nation fighting for independence, resolved, by a refinement in persecution known only to Asiatics, to inflict upon it a novel and most signal act of vengeance, the disastrous effects of which should remain as a monument of his wrath to future ages. With this view he commanded an embankment to be thrown across the eastern branch of the Indus within his own territories, and dug canals for the purpose of withdrawing the waters of that river entirely from Cutch; and, by this master stroke of implacable resentment, he had the stern gratification of depriving his adversary of nearly half his revenue, blasting the hopes and expectations of a thousand families, and transforming a valuable district of rice country into a gloomy and unproductive waste. The injury has indeed proved irreparable; for, from the influx of the tide, the tract alluded to has become a dreary salt marsh, and the principality may be said to have declined ever since.

A splendid mausoleum, inclosing a tomb of white marble, inscribed with Arabic apothegms of mercy and humility, perpetuates the memory, and commemorates the achievements, of this destroyer, near the capital of Sinde, where his cha-

racter is esteemed as that of a brave and victorious prince. He closed his career, in 1771, after a few hours' illness; his sudden death being attributed, by the pious Moslems, to a curse uttered against him by a fuqueer, whose hut he had sacrilegiously directed to be cleared away, during the erection of the fortress of Hyderabad, which he had the merit of founding.

The demise of Gholam Shah left the musnud vacant for his eldest son, Meean Surufraz Khan; who, far inferior in talents to his sire, was equally unprincipled in conduct, and to whose capricious tyranny is ascribed the ruin of his line. Among the most distinguished personages at his court, was Meer Byram Khan, the chief of a Beloche tribe, named Talpoor, whose members had, for many generations, held the highest offices of the state, and whom, from an impulse of jealousy and suspicion, for which history can show no foundation, he ordered to be put to death, together with his son Sobdar Khan; an act of wanton cruelty and injustice, which led eventually to his own dethronement, after a short reign of five years.

Surufraz was succeeded by his brother Mahommed Khan, and his cousin Sadik Ali Khan, neither of whom retained the government longer than a twelvemonth, and who, together with himself, expiated their crimes or imbecility, by a life of imprisonment and a violent end, agreeably to the mode of disposing of unfortunate princes which

prevails in eastern palaces. The ensigns of state were then assumed by Gholam Nubbee, a brother of Gholam Shah; who, reckless of consequences, and untaught by the fate of his three nephews, immediately entered into an intrigue to assassinate Bejur Khan, the suriving chief of the Talpoors, and son of Byram, who had been absent on a pilgrimage to Mecca at the period of his father's murder. But his treacherous attempts proved utterly unsuccessful, and ended in his own overthrow. He was slain in battle by the adherents of his rival, when the whole power of Sinde fell into the hands of Bejur Khan, who, with a magnanimity scarcely to be expected, was the first to take the oath of allegiance to Abdûl Nubbee, the brother of his fallen enemy.

But neither generosity nor experience could influence the conduct of the ill-fated race of Calora. No sooner had Abdûl Nubbee obtained his seat on the musnud, through the grace of a man who had suffered the bitterest persecution from his family, than, pursuing the wicked policy of his predecessors, he began also to seek the destruction of Bejur Khan, which he at length effected through the friendship of a Hindoo confederate. * On this event no bounds could restrain

* "He essayed numerous modes in vain, but at last effected his purpose by the co-operation of his friend Maharaj Bysing, Rajah of Joudpoor. From him two assassins were sent as messengers on business to Meer Bejur Khan, who,

the fury of the Talpoors, who flew to arms in great numbers; and a series of bloody commotions followed, which brought about a total revolution in the government of Sinde. Abdûl Nubbee fled into the mountains of Belochistan; and, after various attempts to recover his power, (in one of which, through the assistance of the king of Cabûl, he was partially successful, and added to his crimes the murder of Abdullah Khan, the son of Meer Bejur,) he passed the remainder of his life, as an exile, in poverty and contempt.* Futteh Ali Khan, the son of Sobdar, and grandson of Byram, whose bravery and perseverance, excited by revenge, had been chiefly instrumental in effecting the change, was, by the general voice, called to the direction of affairs, and was shortly afterwards confirmed as ruler of the country by the patent of the king,

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availing themselves of the pretence of secret information to gain a nearer approach, plunged their daggers into his breast, and he instantly expired."—CROW. The Ameers made this murder a plea for requiring the gentlemen of Mr Smith's embassy in 1809 to appear at their durbar unarmed; an insulting proposal, which, it is scarcely necessary to say, was at once rejected.

* "Timour Shah, after some unavailing attempts to restore him, (Abdool Nubbee) conferred on him the government of Leia as an indemnity for Sinde, and formally invested the chief of the Talpoories with the government of that province. Abdool Nubbee repaid the Shah's bounty by rebelling in his new province, was defeated by the royal troops, and ended his days in poverty at Dera Haujee Khan in Upper Sinde."—ELPHINSTONE's *Cabûl.*

Timour Shah. On his own elevation, this prince liberally resolved to admit to a participation in his high destiny, his three younger brothers, Ghoolam Ali, Kurm Ali, and Mourad Ali; and the four agreed to reign together under the denomination of the Ameers, or Lords of Sinde. While they all lived, the strong and unvarying attachment they evinced for each other, gained them the honourable appellation of the *Char Yar*, or "the four friends;" and although Meer Futteh Ali died in 1801, and Ghoolam Ali in 1811, this government, a phenomenon in history, has continued, with little alteration, from its first commencement to the present moment. There are still some remnants of the exiled house living under the protection of Runjeet Sing, the celebrated Sikh chieftain, and the king of Joudpoor.

The intercourse of the British with Sinde has been rare, and for the most part unsatisfactory. The great advantages of Tatta as an emporium for the trade of central Asia, early invited English speculators to the Indus; but the constant opposition of the Portuguese prevented their effecting a permanent settlement, and if we may judge from the indignities offered to the ambassadors of James the First to the King of Persia, as they passed through in 1614, our countrymen must, at that time, have been in bad repute. About 1758, Gholam Shah encouraged the Bombay Government to establish a factory at Tatta, which was withdrawn,

however, some years after; though so late even as the beginning of this century, Mr Crow appears to have been our commercial resident at that city. The ambitious schemes of the French made it necessary in 1808-9 to send missions to the chief powers in the north of India, in order to counteract their intrigues; and while Mr Elphinstone and Sir John Malcolm were deputed to the courts of Cabûl and Persia, an envoy also proceeded to Hyderabad, who, although indifferently received, gained the object of the governor-general. Before this embassy, the Ameers had seen no British subjects, except as petitioners for mercantile benefits; which gave rise to a reproach they have been often known to apply to us, unwittingly in the same terms as a much greater personage, that we are a nation of shopkeepers. Of this erroneous impression, we may presume that they are by this time pretty nearly cured. Our transactions with their Highnesses subsequently to our invasion of Cutch in 1816, are detailed in the sketch of the history of that country subjoined to the present narrative.

I waited with the greatest impatience till the morning of the 3d November, when the expected letter from the Ameers arrived. It was couched in the most friendly terms; begging me to come with all convenient speed to Hyderabad, and informing me that two noblemen, high in their favour, had been despatched to meet me, and con-

duct me to their court. I prepared immediately to obey the welcome summons, and made arrangements for taking the straight route by Pallia and Gharee; but here again the vakeel interfered, stating that he had been directed to conduct me by the road of Bhey, or Mugrbhey, a large town in a westerly direction, situated in the province of Jattee. It certainly excited my surprise, that if the Ameers required my presence for the cure of a dangerous disorder, they should prescribe a circuitous route, by which the journey would be protracted so many days longer. The vakeel, however, could not give any satisfactory explanation, and the killedar of Luckput strongly urged me not to venture; but I found afterwards that these suspicions were most unjust, and that my detention, both there and on the road, was merely to enable the Sinde authorities to receive me with greater civility and distinction.

All things being prepared, I embarked in the afternoon with a fair wind, and reached Kotree, the landing-place, on the opposite side, about five o'clock. The distance in a direct line is not more than four miles, but, from the windings of the stream, our voyage must have exceeded eight. One of the most extraordinary effects of the great earthquake in 1819 was produced upon this channel,* which, before that dreadful convulsion, was

* The following particulars regarding this river are related by my brother in his memoir of the eastern mouth of

fordable at low water, but which is now at all times impracticable for foot-passengers. From

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the Indus, and will serve to convey an idea of the monstrous policy pursued by the Caloras for the ruin of their enemy, the Rao of Cutch, whose country has never yet recovered from the effects of their vengeance.

" The disadvantages which Cutch labours under are not altogether natural, but have originated from jealousy of a neighbouring power, which has been evinced in a most cruel degree, by depriving it of the fresh water of the Indus, and thereby destroying a large tract of irrigated land, and converting a productive rich country into a sandy desert.

" The Raos of Cutch had at no distant period three Tannas in the dominions of Sinde, viz. Ballyaree, Raoma ka Bazar, and Budeena, their right to which was undisputed. The year 1762 gave, however, a new era to both nations, and it was the commencement of a calamitous one for Cutch. Ghoolam Shah Kalora, after bringing an army of eighty thousand men into Cutch, and meeting with a warm reception at a hill above the small village of Jharra, returned full of vengeance to Sinde, and threw a bund across the Phurraun river at Mora, which, although it did not entirely prevent the waters of the Indus passing by Luckput, so impeded the progress of the main stream that all agriculture depending on irrigation from it ceased.

" Previous to the battle of Jharra in 1762, the eastern branch of the Indus or Phurraun emptied itself into the sea by passing Luckput and Cotasir, and the country on its banks participated in the advantages which this river bestows throughout its course. Its annual inundations watered the soil, and afforded the natives of Cutch a plentiful supply of rice, the whole country between Sinde and Luckput then known by the name of ' Sayra' being cultivated ; and so fertile was it, that it yielded an annual revenue to the govern-

the low and level nature of the Sindian coast, it is scarcely discernible from Luckput ; but the shores of Cutch are distinctly seen, and present a bold striking appearance from the opposite side.

Kotree is merely the name given to the landing place in Sinde. There is neither house, bunder, nor inhabitants, nay, not even the usual party of soldiers for the collection of the revenue ; a precaution seldom neglected by either the Cutch or Sindian government, and the omission of which, in this instance, is only to be attributed to the want of fresh water, which is not procurable for the use of man within many miles of the shore. We saw about a hundred camels on the beach, which had come laden with ghee from Sinde, together with several merchants who were preparing to embark for Cutch. Some delay occurred in landing the baggage ; but by seven o'clock we marched, with a beautiful moonlight, for Lah, in a direction nearly north-westerly. We continued our journey till eleven o'clock, by which time we reached our destination. Not a tree, house, nor human being, except our own people, was to be seen on the

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ment of from seven to eight lacs of corries, upwards of two lacs of rupees. The bunds thrown across deprived it of this advantage, and the channel, which had been before deep and navigable, became now quite shallow and filled with mud, there being no running stream to carry it off."—*Memoir of a Map of the Eastern Branch of the Indus,* by Lieutenant A. Burnes, assistant quarter-master-general of the Bombay army.

road, which extended for about eighteen miles over a level tract of country, a continuation of the great Northern Runn, or, in other words, a perfect desert. I found the road firm and hard, though I was informed that it would be impassable, or nearly so, in the rainy season.

At Lah there are two or three trees in the immediate neighbourhood; but the same appearance of Runn extends all around, interspersed with scattered and stunted shrubs. The country, as far as the eye can reach, is a dead unproductive flat, nor is there a hill or village visible in any direction. A few Sindian soldiers, not above eight or ten, whose only place of residence is an open wooden shed, and whose chief food is camel's milk, are stationed at Lah to collect a tax on the merchandize which passes; and they are its only inhabitants. But even from these few specimens I could at once distinguish a different people, different manners, and different language from those of Cutch. They were men of large size, dressed in frocks resembling those of English labourers, of a coarse dark blue cotton, trowsers of the same material, and the national cap, which is of a cylindrical form, about eight inches in height, and commonly made of coloured cloth. Like their countrymen in general, they wore long beards and moustachios, and were armed with swords, daggers, matchlocks, and shields. I shall probably have occasion afterwards to allude to the military retainers of the

Ameers ; in the meantime, I cannot refer to a more exact delineation of the appearance, dress, and accoutrements of the Sindian soldier, than that which is given in the frontispiece to Pottinger's Travels in Belochistan. Lah has been chosen as a post, I presume, from its being the first place on the road from Cutch where water is drinkable; though this is saying too much for the muddy brackish fluid which was presented to us : none of the Sipahis with me could swallow it, and they were obliged to depend on the small supply they had brought with them from Luckput. I found the place extremely disagreeable ; for, besides there being no water to drink, the air was impregnated with saline exhalations and the disgusting effluvia of camel's dung.

It would be uninteresting, as well as unnecessary, to follow particularly the course of my journey through the barren and desolate tract I traversed during the two following days. On the morning of the 4th I halted at Vere, twelve miles, and proceeded about thirteen miles further to Himiut on the forenoon of the 5th. Neither of these places merits a detailed description ; they are names merely given to stations in the desert, where a little brackish water is to be obtained from marshes in the neighbourhood. At Himiut I learned that the officers who had been despatched from the court to receive me, had taken the route by Ruree, and instead of pursuing my march

to Mugrbhey, I accordingly turned towards that town and reached it on the night of the 5th, a distance from my last stage of about twenty miles. The road from Lah to Ruree extended in a direction nearly north, through a continuation of the same sort of country as I have already described, a desert Runn, without an elevation to vary the scene. As I approached nearer Ruree, I saw several extensive marshes of fresh water which are supplied, I presume, from the Sunkra* and Meeta Meera branches of the Indus, as laid down in our maps, but which are unknown to the natives by these names.

It required little discernment to discover that the road from Kotree to Ruree was quite unsuited

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* The Sunkra river is mentioned in the treaty of partition between Nadir Shah and the Emperor Mahommed, as the common boundary between Hindoostan and the Persian provinces. Hence Major Rennell infers that the eastern branch of the Indus is named Sunkra ; which, however, is certainly not the case for many miles from its mouth. It is called at Luckput, the Koree, and farther up, the Phurraun. The meaning of the word Sunkra is " narrow ;" and although such a supposition is highly improbable, the contracting parties perhaps only meant by " Nulla Sunkra" a narrow river, which was known to both. It is worthy of remark, however, that the natives of Sinde have no other name, at Hyderabad, for the Indus than that of the " Derya," or sea. They distinguish it from the ocean by terming it the " Derya Sheereen" or " Meeta Derya," which means the fresh water sea, in contradistinction to " Derya Shor " or salt water sea.

for military purposes. I question if it be at all passable in the rains; and although, during the dry season, artillery could, no doubt, be conveyed by this entrance into Sinde, still the total want of supplies, and, I may almost say, of fresh water, for a distance of above forty-nine miles, would render it extremely inconvenient for the passage of an invading army. In these inhospitable tracts, and all along the Delta of the Indus, the camels of Sinde, so famed throughout the whole of Asia, are reared, and they are the only species of conveyance used in the country, carts being unknown. The traffic by land, between the lower provinces and Candahar, is carried on by means of these animals, which are supposed to acquire a greater hardihood, from being brought up in salt marshes, where they are limited, from the first, in their allowance of fresh water.

The villages of Sinde, on this side the Indus, are much inferior in appearance to those of Cutch, and are entirely destitute of the stone buildings and tiled roofs, which give an air of neatness and comfort to those of the latter country. They are for the most part collections of low huts, composed entirely of clay and thatch, while even the mosques, with which they abound, are generally of the same frail materials, and only distinguishable, indeed, by their greater elevation, and a feeble attempt at ornament. Many of the inhabitants of the province live in grass hovels in the fields

which they cultivate.* Most of the villages have no name except that of their actual owner; and it is not unusual for the whole population of a place to remove their dwellings to another station, as inclination or necessity prompts them, and when either food or forage fails.

The town of Ruree is superior to most of its kind, and was till lately a place of considerable opulence. Being, however, so far removed from the freshes of the Indus, and depending chiefly on the periodical rains, it has, during the last few years, suffered very severely from want of water, like the neighbouring country of Cutch. The inhabitants are now reduced to below five hundred; but at the time I visited them, grain was so plentiful that our horses were fed with rice, cut unripe, instead of grass. Towards the west I was told that there was cultivation in abundance, but that the opposite direction was a dreary waste. The only object of interest at this place is a large mosque, sacred to the memory of Peer Noor Shah, which is visible at a great distance, and which was built a hundred and fifty years ago, of stones brought from the neighbourhood of Tatta. Near the town is a large tank of excellent water.

Immediately on my arrival at Ruree, I was

* The moveable houses of the people of Sinde are mentioned by Arrian, as one of the peculiarities of the country in the days of Alexander.

visited by the Khans whom the Ameers had sent to meet me, and who were introduced as Hyder Khan Lagharee, the governor of the province of Jattee, and nephew of the principal vizier, and Bahadoor Khan, both distinguished officers of the Sinde government. They received me with great courtesy, each embracing me in a ceremonious manner, and after a profusion of civilities on their part, entered into a long complimentary message from the Ameers, who, they assured me, were highly gratified by my visit. They brought orders from Hyderabad that neither I nor my retinue should be permitted to pay for any supplies on the route; and although I was of course unwilling to accept, and remonstrated strongly against, such an expensive mark of kindness to above a hundred persons, I was forced to comply, in order to avoid giving offence. Fifty camels were in attendance, by command of the Ameers, who had given positive directions that none of my followers should be allowed to walk. The Khans even considered seriously how my palanquin bearers could be mounted; and although this was impracticable, I was obliged to consent that the Sipahis of the guard, and all others, should proceed on camels. The supplies were of an expensive description; nothing in fact seemed to be spared that could add to my comfort, or that of my attendants; and sugar, sweetmeats and opium, were daily issued in great profusion.

Having thus given a sketch of my route as far as Ruree, it appears unnecessary to dwell upon uninteresting details. From Ruree I marched to Shahkapoor, ten miles; to Butora, boating it across a deep but narrow river which appeared to be almost stagnant, three miles; to Amra, a small village, three miles; Meerpoor, a considerable town, four miles; Thoora, four miles; Laiqpoor, six miles; Damaka-got, five miles; Bunna, five miles; Cabulpoor, eight miles; Meeanee, four miles; Triccul, five miles; Soomerjee Wusee, eight miles; Jumrajee Wussee, four miles; Hyderabad, four miles.

All these places bear the general features I have already described. In addition to them, I passed through clusters of temporary villages, which do not require any observation, further than that they gave an appearance of extreme populousnesss to the country. At Laiqpoor and Triccul, I took up my abode in wicker bungalows, in the middle of gardens, beautifully shaded, and decked with flowers: these were the hunting lodges of the Ameers. The country continues level till within a few miles of Hyderabad, when it begins to assume a more hilly appearance. From Ruree to Toorta the extensive cultivation and richness of the soil were every where remarkable. I had to cross a number of canals, dug for the purposes of agriculture, from the branches of the Indus; and over many of these, small brick bridges had been

thrown, on which *Mot,hs*, or draw-wells were constantly at play, for irrigating the fields. The transition from the parched deserts of Cutch to the exuberance of vegetable life which was now before me, could not fail to produce the most pleasurable feelings, and a contrast in my mind highly favourable to Sinde. *

It was on the evening of the 8th, that I arrived at Bunna, and saw for the first time the river Indus. My impatience to view this famous classic stream had been so excited, that I left all my baggage behind, and riding nearly forty miles during the day, reached its bank at sunset quite exhausted and fatigued. The feeling with which my curiosity was at length gratified, I will not attempt to describe; but I question whether my Hindoo attendants, who began to mutter their

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* "In every step of his progress, objects no less striking than new, presented themselves to Alexander. The magnitude of the Indus, even after he had seen the Euphrates and the Tigris, must have filled him with surprise. No country he had hitherto visited, was so populous and well cultivated, or abounded in so many valuable productions of nature and of art, as that part of India through which he had led his army."—ROBERTSON'S *India*.—"The province of Sindy, in many particulars of soil and climate, and in the general appearance of its surface, resembles Egypt; the lower part of it being composed of rich vegetable mould, and extended into a wide delta, the river Indus, equal at least to the Nile, winding through the midst of this level valley, and annually overflowing it."—RENNELL'S *Memoir*.

prayers to the river as an object of adoration, and who considered immersion in its sacred waters a nearer step to everlasting bliss, felt a stronger, or more overpowering emotion than I did, in contemplating the scene of Alexander's glories. Never before did the worship of water or water gods appear to me so excusable, as in observing the blessings every where diffused by this mighty and beneficent stream.

It is at Bunna that the Pinyaree branch leaves the parent stream. The channel of the latter is here above a mile wide, with a large dry sand bank in the middle. My march from Laiqpoor to Bunna, and from thence to within a short distance of Hyderabad, was through a thick hunting forest belonging to the Ameers, which concealed every other part of the country from my observation. The road extended for many miles along the verge of the Indus, which, at a short distance above Bunna, is a large beautiful river nearly a mile broad, studded with boats, filling its channel from bank to bank, and moving majestically forward, at the rate of about three miles an hour.

Nothing could exceed the attention I experienced on the route from my Mihmandars, who themselves frequently sat up to watch me during the night. A large cotton mattress, covered with crimson silk, was always carried near me in case I should feel disposed to alight; flaggons of cooled sherbet, and other luxuries were also liberally

supplied. The Ameers had sent several hawks, which afforded an attractive sport on the road, and supplied my table with every species of winged game, which indeed is more abundant in Sinde, than in any country I have ever visited. My great object being to reach Hyderabad without delay, our rate of travelling was as rapid as possible. There must have been at least a thousand persons in our party, most of whom were mounted on camels. The Khans themselves adopted this mode of travelling, which is the most usual and comfortable in Sinde, and moved so expeditiously, as generally to keep pace with my horse. Their saddle was a silken cushion, which entirely relieves the rider from the effect of the uneasy gait of the camels. The road by which we travelled had never before, I believe, been passed by any European. The eager curiosity evinced by the inhabitants to see me was beyond all bounds ; my tent was surrounded constantly by a flock of gazers ; and crowds came from all parts of the country to look at the Feringee or European. Some even affected sickness to gain admittance to my presence ; and on my discovering the pretence, they readily acknowledged that their only wish had been to see me, from a belief that it might improve their fortunes.

As I approached nearer Hyderabad, (within thirty miles,) I was met by Mahommed Khan Tora, a nobleman related to the family of the

Ameers; who, together with another officer of rank, named Moussa Cahitan, had been sent to compliment me, and who brought with them a number of attendants. From these persons, I learned that unusual preparations were making for my reception at Court; "for" said they, "other Europeans have come into Sinde on their own affairs, but you are here by the invitation of the Ameers, and will be made welcome in a different manner from them."

At the nearest stage to the capital, I was received by the Nuwaub Wullee Mahommed Khan Lagharee, the prime minister of Sinde, whom, as a mark of great respect, the Ameers had sent to congratulate me on my arrival. He was accompanied by a splendid retinue, composed of nearly all the men of consequence at court, and was carried by eight bearers in a meeanah or elevated chair, made of crimson velvet, with rich fringe and golden ornaments, from which, the moment he saw me, he alighted and cordially embraced me. He is a venerable looking man, of great age and respectability, with the address of a courtier, combined with much natural dignity and kindness. I was placed opposite him in his litter; and in this manner we continued our journey for a considerable distance.

On the morning of the 10th of November, I entered Hyderabad; and no language of mine can do justice to the busy and varied scene which was

then before me. Upwards of ten or twelve thousand persons must have been assembled, all of whom manifested an intense curiosity to see me; the women even, very unlike the gentle Hindoo ladies, pressed themselves close to the chair, and such was the concourse that it was almost impossible to proceed, although the Sindian soldiery spared neither sword nor matchlock in endeavouring to clear the way. Within a mile of the city, I was mounted on a large black horse, handsomely caparisoned, which had been brought out by Wullee Mahommed Khan, and led slowly forwards; but the crowd being found quite impervious, my conductors recommended me to enter my own close palanquin, or box, as they termed it, to be out of sight, and escape the pressing of the multitude.

In this manner, after much labour, in one of the hottest days I had ever experienced, we at length reached the gate of the fortress of Hyderabad, which is appropriated solely to the residence of the Ameers and their families, and where I learned, for the first time, that I was immediately to be introduced to the lords of Sinde. The silence which reigned within the fort formed a strong contrast to the noise and tumult without. After passing through some narrow streets, which were inhabited only by the immediate retainers of the court, I found myself, unexpectedly, among a crowd of well-dressed Sindians, in a large open

area, the walls of which, on either side, were fancifully decorated with paintings, and the ground covered with variegated carpets. At one end appeared three large arched doors with curtains of green baize, towards one of which I was led by the vizier and another officer; and before I could collect myself from the suddenness of the transition, my boots were taken off, and I stood in presence of the Ameers.

The *coup d'œil* was splendid. I had an opportunity of seeing the whole reigning family at a glance, and I have certainly never witnessed any spectacle which was more gratifying, or approached nearer to the fancies we indulge in childhood, of eastern grandeur. The group formed a semicircle of elegantly attired figures, at the end of a lofty hall spread with Persian carpeting. In the centre were seated the two principal Ameers on their musnud, a slightly elevated cushion of French white satin, beautifully worked with flowers of silk and gold, the corners of which were secured by four massive and highly-chased golden ornaments, resembling pine-apples, and, together with a large velvet pillow behind, covered with rich embroidery, presenting a very grand appearance. On each side, their Highnesses were supported by the members of their family, consisting of their nephews, Meer Sobdar and Mahommed, and the sons of Mourad Ali, Meers Noor Mahommed, and Nusseer Khan. Farther off sat their more dis-

tant relations, among whom were Meer Mahmood, their uncle, and his sons Ahmed Khan, and Juhan Khan. Behind stood a crowd of well-dressed attendants, sword and shield bearers to the different princes.

To an European, and one accustomed to form his notions of native ceremony by a much humbler standard, it was particularly gratifying to observe the taste displayed in dress, and the attention to cleanliness, in the scene before me. There was no gaudy show of tinsel or scarlet; none of that mixture of gorgeousness and dirt to be seen at the courts of most Hindoo princes, but, on the contrary, a degree of simple and becoming elegance, far surpassing any thing of the kind it had ever been my fortune to behold. The Ameers and their attendants were habited nearly alike, in angricas or tunics of fine white muslin, neatly prepared and plaited so as to resemble dimity, with cummerbunds or sashes of silk and gold, wide Turkish trowsers of silk, tied at the ankle, chiefly dark blue, and the Sindian caps I have already described, made of gold brocade, or embroidered velvet. A pair of cashmere shawls of great beauty, generally white, thrown negligently over the arm, and a Persian dagger at the girdle, richly ornamented with diamonds, or precious stones, completed the dress and decoration of each of the princes.

Viewing the family generally, I could not but

admire their manners and deportment, and acknowledge, that, in appearance at least, they seemed worthy of the elevation they had gained. The younger princes, indeed, had an air of dignity and good breeding seldom to be met with, either in the European or native character. The principal Ameers were the least respectable of the party in point of looks; probably from having had less advantages, and more exposure to hardships in early life. * They are in reality older,

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* Mr Crow's account of the four brothers is subjoined; but, as he wrote at the end of last century, it must be borne in mind that the description applies chiefly to Futteh and Gholam Ali, the present chief Ameers being then very young. "The infancy of the four princes was passed in great obscurity, and even poverty, under the latter part of the reign of the Caloras, who were not, as may be supposed from the dissentions, friendly to the tribe. The present rulers of Sinde have been seen, it is said, tending cattle in its jungles, and cooking their own meals. Certain it is, that their understandings, dispositions, and manners, betray great barbarity of education, and that since their advancement to an affluent sphere, they have derived little cultivation from literature or society. Their ideas extend no farther beyond the mountains and desert which bound their country, than to events at Candahar, and the highest reach of their wisdom and policy is watching the motions of the king, and bribing his officers to gain delay or remission in their payment of the tribute; their solicitude at home is to guard their personal safety, and to enrich themselves individually, and all the rest of their occupation consists in self-gratification, without a single glance at the condition of the people or the real interest of the country.

but did not appear above the age of fifty, from the very careful manner in which their beards and hair are stained. With one exception, there is little family likeness between them and the younger chiefs, who have inherited from their mothers fair complexions, jet black hair, with long eyelashes and eyebrows. Meer Nusseer Khan struck me at once as a particularly handsome man.

The general style of the Sinde court could not fail to excite my admiration, as much as the appearance of the Ameers. All the officers in attendance, judging from their dress and manners,

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" The Persian language is cultivated at the Durbar, and taught at the public schools, and Meer Futteh Ali Khan, with characteristic inflation and ignorance, conceiving himself the Rûstom of the age, and the exploits of the Talpoories worthy transmission to posterity, has employed a poet, a Sindian of more presumption than learning, to record them in verse like Ferdozi, and called the book in rival distinction to his immortal work the Shah Nameh, the Futteh Nameh. With the same vanity he has lately directed the loves of a Beloche pair, as related in some of the country tales, to be translated into Persian verse, upon the model of Jani's Eusuph and Zuleika, that the diffusion of these poems may establish the fame of Sinde as well in letters as in arms. The Futteh Nameh is rehearsed in durbar, and many of the courtiers mark their adulation, by committing the most fulsome passages to memory. Whenever the prince moves abroad he is preceded by a poet, who proclaims his praise in loud and hyperbolick strain, and the prince does not blush, occasionally to animate him by a command to raise his voice."

seemed to be of superior rank. There was no crowding for places; the rabble had been shut entirely out of doors; and there was a degree of stillness and solemnity throughout the whole, and an order and decorum in the demeanour of each individual, which, together with the brilliant display I have mentioned, impressed me with a feeling of awe and respect, I could not have anticipated. It is scarcely necessary, after what I have described, to say that their Highnesses received me in a state durbar. The native agent who had accompanied the two last embassies from our government was present, and assured me that the arrangements on this occasion, and the nature of my reception were very different, indeed far superior to any ceremonial he had seen during a residence of twenty years in Sinde.

As my boots had been taken off at the door, I determined not to uncover my head, and accordingly walked up the centre of the hall with my hat on. The whole family immediately saluted me, and I was requested to take my seat in front of the chief Ameers, and partly on their musnud. A conversation was at once commenced in the Persian language, and I was asked fifty questions in a breath; Are you well? Are you happy? Are you pleased? Have you been treated well? &c. In answer to these civilities, I replied in the best manner I could; that, from the moment I had entered Sinde, I had experienced nothing

but kindness and respect, and that I was thankful to them for the marked attentions I had received. Meer Kurm Ali observed that I was a guest who had come by invitation; that every thing they had was at my disposal; that they had appointed their chief minister, my Mihmandar or entertainer, who had their orders to comply with my wishes in every respect; and that, at a short distance from the town, a garden had been prepared for my reception, which I might either occupy as I chose, or take up my residence with themselves within the fortress of Hyderabad.

Several inquiries then followed regarding Mr Elphinstone and Sir John Malcolm, Sir Evan Nepean, the Governor-General, and his Majesty King George the Fourth, for all of whom the Ameers professed the greatest respect and esteem. The resident in Cutch, they observed, had acted the part of a friend in permitting me to visit Sinde; and by the grace of God the friendship between themselves and the British government, would now be greater than it had ever been at any former period. From this, their Highnesses passed to the subject of medicine, commencing a minute scrutiny regarding my age, as well as how and where I had studied my profession. In this respect, they seemed inclined at first to adopt the opinion not uncommon in Europe, that youth and knowledge can scarcely be conjoined; and they were evidently somewhat disappointed that I had

neither gravity nor gray hairs to support my pretensions. The first observation I heard made between themselves, was in reference to my youthful appearance.

After having sat about an hour, all strangers were ordered to withdraw, and the subject of Mourad Ali's illness was introduced. From his general appearance, I could scarcely have conceived that he was labouring under any disease, however trivial; and on examination I was gratified to find, that, instead of an immediately dangerous disorder, as I had anticipated, the case was one, which, with proper care and attention, might be relieved, if not perfectly cured. The whole family expressed great satisfaction when I announced this circumstance to them, and expressed my belief that his Highness would be restored to health without a surgical operation, of which they seemed to entertain great apprehensions. Towards the end of the interview, when the reserve on both sides had worn off, and I found I was to be met with confidence and civility, I considered it my duty to take every becoming means in my power to conciliate them by my manners and conversation. In this I had reason to believe I succeeded; for at my departure from their presence, both the chief Ameers assured me they had never before met with an European with whom they had been so much pleased.

From the durbar I was conducted by the Nu-

wab Wullee Mahommed Khan through the same eager crowd to the place allotted for my residence, a large walled garden about a quarter of a mile from the town, the trees of which had been hewn down, and the cultivation destroyed to make room for myself and my people. Several tents were pitched, and among the rest one of great dimensions (about forty feet long with the walls twelve feet high) made entirely of green cloth with scarlet ornaments, and fitted up with cushions, carpets, couches, &c. which was intended as my sitting-room, and had really a striking appearance. I had scarcely recovered the surprise occasioned by the scene arround me, which, with the occurrences of the morning, reminded me strongly of some I had read of in the Arabian Nights' Entertainments, when my attention was further attracted by the arrival of several attendants bearing large trays of provisions. One of these was placed at my feet, and contained about a dozen silver dishes filled with prepared viands of different description, all ornamented with gold leaf, for my own breakfast. The others held "baked meats" also, for the Mahommedans among my servants, and were accompanied by a profusion of fruit, sweetmeats, and articles of food for the Hindoos who were with me. The same ceremony was repeated in the evening; and it was only when I positively declared that I could make no use of what was so

liberally supplied, that the practice was in part discontinued.

In the afternoon of the same day I was again summoned to the presence of the Ameers, when I saw them privately, and without state or parade. They were dressed nearly in the same manner as in the morning, but without cummerbunds and arms, and had very few attendants. Their conversation was extremely conciliatory, and referred chiefly to the subject which interested them most, the illness of Mourad Ali. His Highness had been suffering for five months; and I learned that they had not sent for me until all the native practitioners had given up hopes of curing his disease, and until he himself had despaired of his recovery. His brothers, Futteh and Ghoolam Ali, had died of, or rather perhaps with, complaints of a similar nature, which seem to be hereditary in the family, and he himself had gone so far as to make his will, settle his property, and prepare long written advices for his children. Under these circumstances, the anxiety of Mourad Ali and all connected with him for the restoration of his health, will be readily understood, as well as their subsequent satisfaction.

No time was of course lost in at once entering on the cure; but I encountered some difficulty at first in overcoming the habitual distrust of the Ameers to try medicine from the hands of a stranger, and suffered not a little inconvenience,

personally, from being obliged to go shares with my patient in my own prescriptions, according to the Beloche rule, which requires the physician to swallow one pill before he administers another. Mourad Ali positively refused to take any remedy without this previous ceremony ; and as my complaisance could not bring me to inflict on myself the nauseous dose more than twice, an unfortunate attendant was selected as the subject of experiment, and underwent, without mercy or necessity, such a course of continued sweating and purgation, as must have left on his mind and body, any thing but a favourable impression of the European mode of practising physic. Latterly, when I became more intimate with the Ameers, the custom was dispensed with ; though they took care to intimate to me that their doing so was the highest compliment they could have paid me, and even made so much of the matter, as to direct their envoy to bring it to the notice of the Governor of Bombay, as an extraordinary proof of their confidence and friendship for the British.

By a rigid attention to diet and constitutional treatment, together with the application of the most simple dressings to the disease itself, all dangerous symptoms disappeared by the 20th of November, that is, ten days after my arrival at Hyderabad. I will confess that I was myself taken by surprise ; and it is hardly possible to describe the gratification and gratitude of the Ameers when I

announced to Mourad Ali the propriety of his resuming with moderation his usual pursuits. The illness of one confines the whole family; and none of them, therefore, had breathed fresh air outside the fortress for many months. Preparations were immediately made for a hunting excursion, to which they all proceeded, and I was also invited. The Ameer suffered no inconvenience for some weeks from his disorder; while a dread of the consequences prevented his neglecting the regimen prescribed. But when this ceased he was guilty of some acts of imprudence and excess, which brought on a slight relapse, but did not much retard his general recovery.

The suddenness of a cure so unexpected, and which was to be attributed in a great measure, to the removal of the irritating substances formerly applied, impressed the Ameers with the idea that there were no bounds to my skill in my profession; and some fortuitous circumstances contributed to strengthen the delusion. I had occasion to administer a small quantity of a powerful medicine to Mourad Ali, who declined taking it even after the same dose had been tried on the luckless attendant I have mentioned, till he was positively assured by me what would be the exact effect upon himself. I saw at once that this was in their estimation a grand test of my knowledge; and it was one certainly which perplexed me considerably. Having no alternative, however, I

boldly hazarded a guess, which the event, luckily for my reputation, proved correct; and this circumstance, trifling as it may seem, excited so much the attention of the Ameers that they alluded to it often afterwards.

But to nothing, in this respect, was I more indebted than to the sulphate of quinine; a remedy hitherto perfectly unknown in Sinde, and the effect of which, as it scarcely ever fails in stopping the intermittent fevers of natives, I could generally foretell with a degree of precision that astonished them. By means of this valuable medicine, I was enabled shortly after my arrival, to cure, in two days, a favourite child of the prime minister, who had been suffering from fever for months together, with several other persons in the immediate service of the Ameers; and I would no doubt have gone on to raise my character higher, had not their Highnesses, the moment they discovered the effect of the quinine, seized the phial which contained it without ceremony, and ordered it to be sealed and locked up for their own proper use at a future period. Even afterwards, when I myself fell sick, no solicitations could induce them to part with a single grain, though I was dangerously ill; and when at my departure, I made a request for the bottle in exchange for another, as it was one which belonged to a valuable medicine chest, the proposal was at once rejected, evidently from

an idea, that it might share with its contents some supposed talismanic virtue.

Sinde would be a fair field for English quackery to flourish in. The Ameers never thought of doubting that I had the power of restoring the vigour of youth, provided I was disposed to do so; and Meer Sohrab sent me a letter from Shikarpoor, requesting me to bring to his senses one of his children who had been twelve years an idiot! Meer Noor Mahommed was disappointed that I did not possess the lamp of Aladdin or the wand of Prospero, to transform his mean and contemptible figure into the stately form of his brother Nusseer Khan. I was applied to by Meer Mahommed to remove a white speck from the neck of one of the beauties of his Seraglio, which had been born with her; and his Highness was evidently displeased when my attempts proved unsuccessful. The circumstances of my interview with this lady are curious. It was proposed that I should meet her in a garden, with a wall about five feet high between us; but as I objected to this mode of examining a patient, she was brought to my tent, muffled up among a crowd of old and ugly females, her attendants. She was very beautiful, almost as fair as an European, and altogether a favourable specimen of the women of Sinde, who are superior in appearance to those of India. I saw several dancing girls, whose elegant forms might have graced the harem of the Caliph Walid.

In proportion as Mourad Ali's health recovered, the kindness and attention of the Ameers towards me increased. During my stay at Hyderabad, for the succeeding two months and a-half, every means were adopted by them that could afford me comfort or amusement. The vizier waited on me every morning and afternoon to accompany me to the durbar, where I passed six hours, and often more, daily in their company, and where they received me latterly in nearly the same manner as they did the younger princes. After the first or second visit the ceremony of taking off the shoes, which was, I understand, rigidly insisted on during the two or three short interviews the late envoys had with them, was entirely dispensed with; and the whole arrangement of their court was changed, that a chair might be introduced for me. No entreaties could induce them to discontinue the extravagant system of entertainment for me and my people, which was kept up to the very last day I remained in Sinde.

The conduct of a despotic prince regulates that of his followers. No sooner did the Sindian courtiers observe the disposition of the Ameers towards me, than they began to vie with each other in their obsequiousness. While I was at Hyderabad I was visited, I believe, by the heads of all the tribes resident at court. Letters were read in my presence at the durbar which were to be sent to the Sikhs and other allies, announcing

Mourad Ali's recovery, and highly complimentary to myself, together with congratulatory addresses from Meers Sohrab and Thara, entreating that every distinction might be paid me. Persian verses filled with the grossest flattery were repeated daily, and appeared extremely satisfactory to the Ameers, who themselves took the trouble to explain to me the meaning of the difficult passages.

The example of the rulers had a proportionate effect on the people of Sinde. The intelligence of Mourad Ali's recovery passed through the country like wild-fire, and crowds flocked from all quarters, in the expectation of obtaining relief, many of them from incurable diseases. In every direction, around the garden which I occupied, there were encampments of strangers who had come from a distance. My gate was surrounded by petitioners from morning to night; and the moment I appeared abroad, I was assailed by the most piteous entreaties for medicine and assistance. All these demands on me I was obliged to attend to; nor is there any period of my life during which I underwent more continued labour than in Sinde. The Ameers gave me credit for my assiduity, and thanked me for expending, as they had been informed by report, four thousand rupees worth of medicine on their subjects. I assured them of my readiness to do my endeavours, but did not conceive it necessary to add, that the ut-

most the Honourable Company was likely to suffer on the occasion was nearer forty rupees than the amount they had alluded to.

The consequence of my unremitting exertions was a violent attack of fever, which confined me to my bed for several days. The kindness I then experienced ought not to be omitted here. The Ameers did indeed refuse me the quinine; but they were constant in their inquiries, and extreme in their expressions of anxiety. During the whole of a day in which I was delirious, Wullee Mahommed Khan, whose good feeling I had gained by attention to his children, and frequent conversations with himself, never left my bedside; and when I recovered my senses, the first object which met my eye, was the respected old man kneeling in earnest prayer for my recovery. Such Samaritanism would do honour, and might be an example, to many of a purer creed and better education.

The supreme power in Sinde is understood by foreign states to be vested in the hands of the two youngest, and surviving brothers mentioned in the early part of this narrative, Meers Kurm and Mourad Ali, who are known, both at home and abroad, by the designation of the Chief Ameers, and whose seals are affixed to all public documents issued in the name of the government. But although these have, certainly, no equal in political consequence, there are, nevertheless, other members

of the family who are scarcely inferior in rank to their Highnesses at the court of Hyderabad. Both Futteh and Gholam Ali left sons to whom they bequeathed their shares in the administration, and who, although they have been, on account of their youth and the grasping spirit of their uncles, kept much in the back ground, have lately acquired a degree of influence in the state. Meer Sobdar, in particular, the son of Futteh Ali, who had been consigned to neglect, and appeared till within these few months as an humble attendant in the train of the Chief Ameers, has, since I left Sinde, raised himself, by a successful rebellion, to almost an equality with them; and Meer Mahommed, the son of Gholam Ali, would no doubt be equally fortunate had he spirit or inclination to hazard the attempt. The two sons, also, of Mourad Ali, Meers Noor Mahommed, and Nusseer Khan, must be enumerated amongst the heads of the government.

All these chiefs are in possession of portions of Sinde, the revenues and control of which they respectively enjoy. During the lifetime of Meer Futteh Ali, no division took place in this respect, and his younger brothers were content to owe to his liberality the means of supporting their expences and dignity. After his death the province was portioned out into four equal shares, of which two were allotted to Ghoolam Ali, who engaged to pay the usual charges of the state, and one each to Kurm and Mourad Ali. Since the de-

mise of Ghoolam Ali in 1811, several divisions have, at different times, taken place, and Mourad Ali, on the plea of having descendants, has contrived to despoil his brother and Meer Mahommed of much of their possessions; but, with the exception of the districts in the hands of Meers Sohrab and Thara, who will be mentioned in the sequel, the country is partitioned at this moment * into four unequal shares, of which the largest belongs to Mourad Ali, and the others to Kurm Ali, Meer Mahommed and Sobdar. Mourad Ali's territory is subdivided into portions for his sons and himself. It is not my intention to say any thing further regarding the revenues of Sinde, except that they are not supposed to exceed in all forty lacs of rupees annually.

In addition to the princes above alluded to, there are many other nobles of the Talpoor tribe, always resident at the court of the Ameers; but although they all enjoy the title of Meer or Lord, none of them are permitted to interfere in the affairs of the state, and they derive their lustre and importance solely from their relationship to the reigning family. Of this lineage are Meers Sohrab and Thara, who command in separate districts of their own. They are feudatories of the principal Ameers, who, at the period of the expulsion of the Caloras, acquired, by their own

* June 1828.

bravery, considerable portions of territory, which they have ever since retained. Meer Sohrab resides at Shikarpoor, on the borders of the Punjab, and Meer Thara at Meerpoor, in the Thurr, where they hold separate courts of their own. Meer Sohrab, though opposed at first to Futteh Ali,* appears generally to have supported the

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* "When foreign attack no longer threatened, Meer Sohrab Khan, with a majority of the Talpoory and other chiefs, proposed that the son of Meer Abdulla Khan, Meer Ghoolam Hussain Khan, who has now arrived at years of discretion, should assume the government of Sinde, to which by direct descendancy he was heir, and in consideration of whose minority only, it had, it was urged, been entrusted to Meer Futteh Ali Khan. To this argument Meer Futteh Ali Khan replied by putting his foot in the stirrup. Both parties collected their forces, and, three whole days, were the ranks drawn out on either side in battle array. In this intestine contention of the Talpoory tribe, relations were divided on the different sides, sons threatened fathers, and brothers forgot their birth; the elders of the tribe wisely held out the mischief of such an unnatural butchery; and the women flung themselves between their swords to prevent it. Both parties were persuaded. Meer Ghoolam Hussain Khan acknowledged the sovereignty, and accepted the protection under which he now is, of Meer Futteh Ali Khan, and he acknowledged the independence and perpetuity of the distinct possessions of Meer Sohrab Khan and Meer Tarrah Khan. This accommodation perfected, Meer Futteh Ali Khan made a handsome provision in jaghires for three brothers he had, Meer Ghoolam Ali Khan, Meer Kurm Ali Khan, and Meer Mourad Ali Khan, according to their seniority, and in order to preserve them in an harmonious support of the general

Ameers; but Meer Thara has, on more than one occasion, gone to war with them, and suffered severely as the penalty of his rashness. They are both very old men, and Meer Thara is blind with years. His son, Ali Mourad, is probably the most troublesome subject under the Sinde durbar, and has lately rendered himself well known both to the British and Cutch governments by the protection he has afforded the Meanah plunderers. The relationship of these leaders to the Ameers may be seen from the genealogical table of the Talpoors. *

To a casual observer, it might appear that the power in Sinde was pretty equally divided among the aristocratic members of its government; but a closer inspection will show, that the fabric, though upheld by many, is in reality for the elevation of a single despot. This is Meer Mourad Ali, whose superior energy of character enables him to carry with him the feelings and support of the other branches of the family. He is younger than his brother, but the latter is entirely subservient to his views, and in common with the rest,

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interest of the family, for which they had all laboured in the field, and Meer Ghoolam Ali Khan with signal zeal and effect, he admitted them likewise to a participation in his power and placed their musnuds on each side of his own, an order which is preserved to the present day."—Crow.

* Meer Thara died in August 1829, leaving his possessions to his son Ali Mourad.

is willing to acknowledge him as the only efficient head, and representative.

In explaining my sentiments as to the cause of this fact, it may appear overstrained to speak of the affections of the heart, in reference to Asiatic despots. Still there is one virtue for which this family has ever been distinguished, which has carried with it its own reward, and to a continued exercise of which, they have owed their greatness, and Sinde its tranquillity, for the last thirty years. I allude to the personal attachment, mingled perhaps with policy, which induced Futteh Ali, on his obtaining his own power, to place the musnuds of his brothers on an equality with his own, and restrained them, individually, from any attempt to usurp the whole authority thus divided amongst them. Although it might be supposed that rival and conflicting interests would weaken and destroy so delicate a feeling as that I have now adverted to, it is nevertheless still perceptible, generally, in all the branches of the family, and induces the younger to yield a ready obedience to the wishes of the elder, and at all events to restrain their own ambitious projects, during the lifetime of their seniors. Fanciful as this opinion may seem, it is impossible that any person could have witnessed the constant anxiety and unwearied attention of Mourad Ali's relations for his recovery, without coming to the same conclusion ; nor can I indeed account, in any satisfactory manner, for the cir-

cumstance of a complicated machine like the government of Sinde, apparently so ill connected, having held together so long, without a kindred sympathy in its component parts.

Mourad Ali is about fifty-five years of age, of low stature, and stout habit of body. His complexion is rather fair; and his countenance is the index of a sullen and gloomy mind. He is cold and repulsive in his manners, seldom relaxes into a smile, and never condescends to familar conversation. His personal attachments are confined to the circle of his family; and whether it be affection which procures him their support, or a dread of his power, which induces them to accord it, at all events it is a cruel and remorseless disposition, on his part, and terror on that of his subjects, which enables him to sway the destinies of Sinde. Inconsistent as it may appear, this tyrant is at heart a poor hypochondriac, constantly haunted by the fear of death and the phantoms of his own gloomy imagination. Some of his subjects deny him even the merit of personal courage, though such a supposition is highly improbable; but I have myself known him pass several sleepless nights, from a horror of the consequences of bodily derangement of the most trivial description.

The prevailing feature of Mourad Ali's character is avarice; and he is ever too ready to sacrifice, for its gratification, his own dignity and

the interests of his people. Seldom making promises, he even more rarely fulfils them; and altogether his character may be summed up as that of a selfish and gloomy despot, an Asiatic Tiberius, or Philip the Second, ruling a kingdom by the energies of his mind, with none of the better feelings of the human heart. His resemblance to the former of these monsters is so complete, that I cannot refrain from adding here the words of the Roman historian, as equally descriptive of both: "Multa indicia sævitiæ, quamquam premantur, erumpere—seu natura, sive adsuetudine suspensa semper et obscura verba—odia in longum jaciens, quæ reconderet auctaque promeret."

The character of Meer Kurm Ali forms a perfect contrast to that of his brother. He is a man of approved personal bravery, and, as far as the etiquette of the court permits, is cheerful, condescending, and even affable. Fond of dress and display, he courts popular applause, which Mourad Ali affects to despise; and till lately he was generous to profusion. Even yet he is liberal, although he now shows a disposition to follow the general policy of the Sinde court, and to hoard money. I found the public voice at Hyderabad decidedly in his favour, as a prince who was kind to his subjects and attendants, and who was strict in the performance of his promises. In person he is below the middle size, with a pleasing coun-

tenance and engaging manners. Although but five years older than Mourad Ali, he bears in his appearance the furrows of age, with traces of early intemperance; and, in all human probability, he will ere long leave his more robust and energetic brother the unrivalled actor in the scene.

Kurm Ali is possessed of slender talents, though his education has been good; and he is of so indecisive and easy a disposition, that he has accustomed himself through life to regulate his conduct chiefly by the advice and wishes of others. It is not unlikely, therefore, that, were he even to survive his brother, he would sink, not unwillingly, into obscurity, as he has no children of his own, and would probably have neither the power nor the inclination to control his nephews. On the other hand, such is the kindly feeling which exists between the brothers, that, were he to die first, Mourad Ali would no doubt inherit his treasures and possessions, and retain the sole authority in his own hands.

Meer Mahommed Khan, the son of Ghoolam Ali, is the next in rank to the chief Ameers. He is about the age of thirty, and a handsome man, though somewhat disfigured by a hare-lip. He inherited from his father great wealth and political consequence in Sinde. For some time he took his seat on the musnud with his uncles; and, in common with them, he enjoyed the honour of a salute from the ramparts of Hyderabad,

when he appeared abroad. Being, however, of a mild and unambitious character, he has renounced, apparently without regret, all this semblance of dignity; together with the most substantial part of his property, of which he has been despoiled, on various pretences, by Mourad Ali and his favourite servants, from an inability to control them, or to manage his own affairs. He is singularly good-natured, quite indifferent to state or parade, and much liked by his immediate retainers, many of whom have made large fortunes in his service.

Meer Mahommed has no family; and I may here remark, that it is the custom of the Court of Sinde to put to death all children born to the princes of slave women. The butchery which this horrid cruelty engenders must be shocking, as I was assured that one member of the family alone had consigned to the tomb no less than twenty-seven of his illegitimate offspring. The authority of ages may sanction, and the rites of religion sanctify, the inhuman practices of Suttee and infanticide among the Hindoos; and we may pity, if we cannot pardon, the misguided feeling which impels the proud Rajpoot to crush at her birth the daughter, whose preservation, as in Cutch, too often ends in her prostitution; but humanity turns with unmingled horror from the monstrous barbarity I have now mentioned, which is as repugnant to the precepts of the Koran as it is

to the dictates of nature, and for which we search in vain for any reasonable apology. "They are utterly lost," says Mahommed, "who have slain their children foolishly, without knowledge, and have forbidden that which God hath given them for food; devising a lie against God."

Meer Mourad Ali's eldest son, Noor Mahommed, is about thirty years of age, and may be considered as nearly the counterpart of his father, with all the bad, and but few of the strong, parts of his character. He was very unpopular; and I never heard of any virtue he possessed, except a selfish attachment to his parent. Accumulation of wealth is the apparent object of his life. This chief is the only one of the family who is illiterate; and I have myself been present when he was obliged to request the assistance of a servant in composing a common Persian note to his father. He has a son, a fine-looking boy, named Meer Shadad, who has attained the age of twelve years.

Meer Mahommed Nusseer Khan is the second son of Mourad Ali, and is by far the most engaging and popular of the reigning family in Sinde. He is twenty-five years of age, of handsome figure though rather corpulent, with much dignity of manners, and a noble expression of countenance, undisfigured by the least resemblance to his father or brother. The dissimilarity, fortunately, is as complete in character as in personal

appearance. Nusseer Khan is as generous as they are sordid, and has lavished the treasures which were allotted him with profuse liberality; a quality which, whether a virtue or a vice, has ever been known to receive general praise and approbation, particularly in Asiatic countries.

During my march to Hyderabad, his Highness's virtues and poetical genius formed the theme of constant commendation; and, presuming that the vanity of authors was much the same in all parts of the world, I took an opportunity, on my first visit, to request, as a particular favour, that he would honour me with a copy of his works, entitled the Dewan Jaffieri, the fame of which, I added, had extended all over India. This compliment was most graciously received; and a few days after he presented to me a beautiful illuminated copy of them, with an inscription on the title-page written by himself. If they are really his own composition, they do him infinite credit; but I must confess that his conversation never exhibited any proofs of an exalted imagination.

The present of the Dewan Jaffieri was followed by gifts of a superior description from the other Ameers; who, although they could not compliment me with books written by themselves, begged my acceptance of elegant editions of the Poems of Hafiz and Sadi, some of which had had a place for many generations in the library of the Caloras, and, in addition to their real value,

were beautiful specimens of Persian penmanship. Amongst several curiosities given me at the same time, Wullee Mahommed Khan presented me with a pair of handsome green slippers, which had been pressed by the royal feet of Shah Shuja Ool Moolk, the king of Cabûl, and for which he entertained a true vizier-like reverence.

Nusseer Khan has ever expressed a favourable feeling towards the British government. He has been unremitting in his civilities to our native agent at Hyderabad; and, during my residence there, he was even more attentive to me than the others. He is the darling of the soldiery, from excelling in all manly exercises, and the most likely of the younger branches of the family to attain that pre-eminence which some one or other will probably in the end acquire. He does not appear a very determined or aspiring character; but it is impossible to foretell how his disposition may be influenced by a fair field for his ambition, particularly as the stream of public opinion is so decidedly in his favour.

I had no opportunity of becoming personally acquainted with Meer Sobdar, who, when I was in Sinde, happened to be out of favour at court. He made some advances to me; but the Ameers objected to my having any communication with him. He is the son of Futteh Ali, the chief to whom the Talpoor family owes its greatness; and he was born in 1801, a few hours before the death of his fa-

ther, who had only time to entreat the kindness of his brothers to his infant before he expired. For many years Sobdar was the adopted child of Kurm Ali; but, being subject to epilepsy, and having one day fallen down in the durbar, in consequence of that distressing disorder, Mourad Ali contemptuously asked his brother what he expected to make of such an unfortunate wretch; and since then, until very lately, he has lived in obscurity, on a paltry pension of 25,000 rupees per annum.

Sobdar naturally traced his misfortunes to Mourad Ali; and when this prince was seized with his late dangerous illness, he and his few adherents could scarcely suppress a feeling of exultation at his expected death. This, together with a demand he had made publicly for the restoration of his rights, inflamed the rage of Mourad Ali; and although Sobdar was obliged, by the commands of the Ameers, to attend at the durbar, I observed that he was never addressed by any one, nor received with the slightest demonstration of respect.

But Mourad Ali had mistaken, in some measure, the character of Sobdar, who was secretly carrying on intrigues with some of the surviving friends of his father, and with Meer Ali Mourad, the turbulent son of Meer Thara, to obtain a restitution of his birth-right. My presence prevented his bringing his plans to maturity; but

immediately after I left Hyderabad, he found means to escape to the Fort of Islamkote in the desert, where he was joined in the course of five or six days by the conspirators and their followers, amounting to 15,000 men, and marched direct on Hyderabad. The principal Ameers were taken perfectly unawares at the boldness of the undertaking, and prudently settled matters by a compromise; consenting to grant Sobdar a share of the country, and a participation in the government. This young prince's elevation was highly unsatisfactory to all the other chief members of the family; and it is most probable, that, when a favourable opportunity presents itself, no means will be left untried to remove a barrier so prejudicial to their interests.

The personal appearance of Meer Sobdar is favourable. He is about the middle size, and rather inclined to corpulency. In his manners he is formal; although, from the restraint in which he was constantly placed, I had probably no means of judging correctly of him in this respect. Great pains were, I understand, taken with his education; and although he is, no doubt, a man of weak mind, and most likely the tool only of a party, he is not deficient in literary taste and attainments, if a knowledge of Persian books and poetry can be dignified by such an appellation.

The government of Sinde is a pure military des-

potism; and the great misfortune of the people, next to the circumstance of their being entirely at the mercy of their rulers, is, that the latter are ignorant of the important truth, that in a well regulated kingdom the interest of the prince and the people are identical. Like all Asiatic governors, the Ameers have no idea of sacrificing present gains, however trivial, for future advantages; and, as they unfortunately consider the stability and grandeur of their dynasty as depending chiefly on the accumulation of wealth, their course of internal policy is directed to this object, and is pursued with comparatively little benefit to themselves, and great detriment to their people. Under this short-sighted system, the imposts and taxation in Sinde are enormous, and have the effect of paralyzing nearly the whole trade, and deeply affecting the industry of the country. The revenues are farmed to the highest bidders; who, as they enjoy their contracts only by the grace of their masters, and can never, on any pretence, obtain exemptions for themselves, are obliged to exert to the utmost, during their ephemeral reign, their powers of exaction and oppression.

It has excited the surprise of every European who has cast a thought on this state of affairs, that a government, so formed and conducted, should have maintained its existence for so long a period. The family feeling which unites together the Ameers, I have alluded to; and the his-

tory of Asiatic kingdoms is the best evidence of what man will suffer with patience, and what princes may inflict with impunity. Sinde has, besides, advantages over other countries similarly situated; advantages which, to a certain extent, enable her to struggle against the curses of misrule and ignorance. She is almost independent of the periodical rains, and of the famines and disasters too frequently attendant on the failure of these in the provinces surrounding her. Heaven has blessed her with a constant and never-failing boon in the river Indus,—that source of commerce and fertility of which no tyranny can despoil her; which enables the cultivator not only to till his fields with little trouble or expence, but to look forward in due season to a certain harvest, and to transfer, should he wish it, with facility and profit, the abundant product of his toil to other countries. Notwithstanding all the opposition of the rulers, the same fruitful cause reduces the price of labour and of food lower than in Cutch; the inhabitants of which are known in seasons of scarcity to seek invariably for subsistence in Sinde, rather than to emigrate into our own territories. Hence there is an appearance of plenty and contentment throughout this misgoverned land, which would surprise any traveller who did not take every circumstance into consideration.

I may remark further, that there are bounds to the horrors of despotism as to all other human

evils; and it is but justice to confess, that the Ameers seem rather to be ignorant of true notions of policy, and misled by the delusions of prejudice, than wantonly cruel and iniquitous in their proceedings. Moreover, they cannot be blind to the danger and hopelessness of oppressing their subjects beyond certain limits; and, luckily for the latter, the system of finance carries with it a check which operates partially in their favour. The government has seldom any greater sympathy with the farmer than with the ryot, and, consequently, is not deaf to appeals against him, or unwilling that discussions between the parties should be referred to the expounders of the Mahommedan law. Another fact is, that, as the Mussulmans are all soldiers, and have rarely money or patience sufficient to become lease-holders, the revenues are for the most part in the hands of Hindoos; a class which possesses little favour at court, and no influence or respectability in the country, except that of wealth. The farmers do not, as in Cutch, combine with their leases the power of civil magistrates; and, as they are constant objects of jealousy and dislike to the Mahommedan military governors of the districts, who envy their riches and despise their persons and religion, the people no doubt profit by this application of the political maxim *Divide et Impera.* It is melancholy, however, to reflect that the only safeguard of property in Sinde is derived from a sort of balance between the evil pas-

sions of the rulers ; and that it may too often happen to be the interest of the latter to unite, with one accord, to rob the helpless villager of the profits of his labours.

Yet even under all these disadvantages it may be doubted whether Sinde has for many years enjoyed comparatively greater blessings, or stood higher in political consequence than at the present moment. Ignorant and oppressive as her rulers are, her annals do not show that she has ever been much better governed in recent times ; and they have at least the merit of having maintained her in a state of tranquil, and almost uninterrupted repose for the last thirty years. The restless and daring spirits also, who were instrumental in bringing about the revolution which ended in the downfal of the Caloras, have, in the course of nearly half a century, either disappeared from the stage, or become incapacitated by years. The present generation know only by tradition of the murders and rapine of their fathers ; and while a calm has thus succeeded the tempest in Sinde, as in all empires which have undergone commotions, a degree of order and permanency has gradually crept into the government which was before unknown to it.

It is but too true that there are many signs of decay and depopulation in Sinde ; but the people invariably trace these evils to the season of civil discord ; nor is there any evidence to show that they

have increased in any unusual degree, during the administration of the Ameers, or that the latter are really more indifferent to the interests or commerce of their subjects than the later Caloras; one of whom, Surufraz Khan, besides being a blood-thirsty tyrant, discouraged trade and manufacture by every means in his power, and amongst the rest by expelling the British factory from Tatta.* The revenues have without doubt much

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* As a proof that the state of affairs in Sinde is not worse now than during the time of the Caloras, I give the following extract from Major Rennell, which was written before the elevation of the Talpoor family: "The Hindoos, who were the original inhabitants of Sindy, and were reckoned to outnumber the Mahommedans in the proportion of ten to one in Captain Hamilton's time, are treated with great rigour by the Mahommedan governors, and are not permitted to erect any pagodas or other places of worship, and this severity drives vast numbers into other countries.—RENNELL's *Memoir*. Mr Elphinstone also proves that many of the present evils of Sinde are to be attributed to causes altogether independent of the conduct of the Ameers. I have already mentioned that Abdool Nubbee had on one occasion obtained the support of the King of Cabûl, and I give the words of Mr Elphinstone to show in what manner the assistance was afforded. "About this time (1781) broke out the rebellion of the Talpoories, which ended in the expulsion of the governor of Sinde. In the course of next year, the King (Timour Shah) sent a force under Muddud Khan to reduce the insurgents, which soon overran the whole province. The Talpoories retired to their original desert, and the other inhabitants appear to have fled to the hills and jungles to avoid the Dooranee army. Muddud Khan laid waste the country with fire and sword; and so

diminished; but the defalcation in this respect is to be attributed chiefly to sacrifices wilfully made by the Ameers, such as turning large tracts of their most productive districts into hunting forests, instead of farming them out for the purpose of cultivation. *

The dismemberment of the Cabûl monarchy, while it has absolved the Ameers from their irksome allegiance to a lord paramount, and rendered them almost independent sovereigns, has enabled them to appropriate to themselves, without difficulty, the valuable district of Shikarpoor, which they seized about five years ago, and the additional revenues of which they now share with Meer Sohrab, who governs it. The same cause has relieved them from the obnoxious annual tribute of

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severe were his ravages that a dreadful famine followed his campaign, and the province of Sinde is said not yet to have recovered from what it suffered on that occasion."—ELPHINSTONE's *Cabûl.*

* Of the passion of the Ameers for hunting, the following is a characteristic anecdote. "Meer Futteh Ali has depopulated, at a loss to his own revenue of between two and three lacs of rupees annually, one of the most fertile spots in the neighbourhood of Hyderabad, because frequented by a species of antelope called Kotapacha, which he has most pleasure in hunting. A short time ago the youngest brother (Mourad Ali) unrelentingly banished the inhabitants of an ancient village and razed it to the ground, because the crowing of the cocks and the grazing of the cattle disturbed the game in his brother's jagire which was contiguous."—CROW.

fifteen lacs of rupees, which they were bound to pay to the Affghaun court; for although Runjeet Sing has frequently intimated his intention, as head of the Cabûl states, of demanding the usual subsidy, they have invariably denied his right; and he has either been too much occupied with his neighbours, or restrained by his political engagements, to lead an army into Sinde as the only means of enforcing his claim.

The whole family of the Ameers are extremely strict in the observances of religion; and I have myself seen some of them kneel down to pray in the public durbar. An extraordinary difference,*

* The difference of religious opinion which exists in the family of the Ameers, will appear even more extraordinary from the following remarks on the Sheeah and Soonee sects by Sir John Malcolm, and an extract I shall give from the pen of Major Pottinger. It must be borne in mind that the Ameers themselves are Beloches, and extremely proud of their descent. "It is evident, therefore, that the Soonee and Sheeah faith can never exist in any concord with each other. A stranger to the name of Mahommed is more acceptable to a zealous man of either of these religions than the opposite sectary, who insults him with an hourly attack of his favourite tenets; and their disagreement, as has been before stated, relates to matters of faith or rather opinion more than to practice."—Malcolm's *Persia*, Vol. ii. "With regard to religion they (the Beloches) with a very few exceptions to the westward, are Soonee Mussulmans, and inveterate in their hatred and enmity against the Sheeas, under which persuasion, I am convinced, it would be more dangerous to

however, exists among them on this important point; which, strange to say, is the most marked between the two brothers whom I have represented as so much attached to each other. The Talpoors were originally Soonnees, like the Beloches and Sindians in general; but their connection with Persia has infected the court with the heresies of that kingdom; and, with the exception of Mourad Ali and Sobdar, who are still attached to the orthodox doctrines, they have become Sheahs or followers of Ali. Meer Mourad Ali's gloomy mind leads him to dwell much on the subject of religion, and to add to his other evil qualities those of a bigotted enthusiast. The rest are scarcely more liberal. At the time I was confined to my residence by indisposition, I sent a Hindoo medical assistant to bring me a report of the state of my patient; but when he went to the durbar, it was unanimously agreed that his putting his hand near the seat of the disease might be prejudicial, and he was dismissed accordingly, with an apology to me for not accepting his services.

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appear in Belochistan, than even as a Christian.—POTTINGER'S *Belochistan*. The author of Anastasius also thus characterizes the two sects: "As the difference between them is small, so is the hatred proportionably intense. The Turks are all Soonnees, the Persians all Scheyis; the former are more fanatical and the latter more superstitious."

When I left Sinde, I carried with me two gold watches belonging to the Ameers to be repaired; but one of my servants having by chance hinted that there was a Hindoo in Bhooj who was qualified for the task, they were not consigned to my charge, till I gave a pledge that they should not pass into the hands of an accursed *Boot Purust*, or worshipper of idols. Among the inscriptions inlaid in gold on a highly-valuable Damascus sword, with which their Highnesses presented me, there is a verse written by their vizier, and highly applauded by themselves, containing a prayer that a hundred thousand Hindoos may perish by its edge. *

I had frequent discussions with the Ameers on the subject of religion. They professed to have a respect for the Christian faith, the founder of which had been esteemed a great prophet by Mahommed. Their questions and style of reasoning often amused me exceedingly, and particularly on one occasion, when they asked me whether I was one of the Christians who paid adoration to the hoofs of the ass which carried our Saviour into Jerusalem, and which they understood were still preserved as a relic in a house of religious worship in Europe. It is scarcely necessary to add,

* "Of ancient steel and water, I am the produce of Persia; I am light in appearance, but I am heavy against my enemies. When a brave man wields me with his strength, a hundred thousand Hindoos will perish by my edge."

that they know nothing of the distinctions between Catholics, Greeks, and Protestants.

A spirit of religious toleration cannot be enumerated among the few virtues of the Sinde government or its subjects; and in no respect whatever is the oppression of the Ameers more apparent than in their zeal for the propagation of the Mahommedan faith. It is really difficult to conceive how any Hindoos should have continued to reside in the country; and the fact can only be accounted for by that attachment, which man shares with the vegetable, to the soil in which he is reared. The indignities they suffer are of the most exasperating description. They are even forced to adopt the Mahommedan dress, and to wear beards. Till lately, none of this class were permitted to ride on horseback; and amongst the few who now enjoy the privilege, a small number only in the immediate service of government are allowed the comfort and honour, as it is esteemed, of a saddle. Merchants of wealth and respectability may be seen mounted on asses and mules; animals considered so unclean, that none but the vilest outcasts in other countries can touch them with impunity: and, even from this humble conveyance, they are obliged to descend and stand aside when any bloated Mussulman passes by.

The Mahommedans are encouraged and exhorted to destroy all the emblems of idolatry they may see in Sinde. The degraded and unfortunate

follower of Brahma, is denied the free exercise of his religion; the *tom-tom* is seldom heard, being only beat when permission is granted; and although there are a few temples without images at Hyderabad, the sound of music never echoes from their walls, It is in the power of any two "true believers," by declaring that a Hindoo has repeated a verse from the Koran, or the words "Mahommed the Prophet," to procure his immediate circumcision. This is the most common, and, by the persecuted class themselves, considered the most cruel of all their calamities; while, as it is resorted to on the slightest pretence, and always performed with a mockery of its being for the eternal happiness of the sufferer, mental agony is made to add its bitterness to bodily infliction. Such severities recal to memory the stern fanaticism which attended the standard of the Prophet on the first promulgation of Islamism, when the alternative offered to idolaters was death or conversion; and when the Caliph Omar prohibited the conquered Christians of Jerusalem from riding on saddles, ringing bells, or appearing abroad, except in a particular habit; nor is it improbable that the Ameers are stimulated by an enthusiastic ardour to imitate so sacred an example as that of the Commander of the Faithful.

Of their summary mode of administering justice towards Hindoos, I had myself an opportunity of judging. A Banian merchant came to my re-

sidence one day with several articles of cloth, &c. for sale ; and, after leaving the garden, returned in the course of an hour, complaining that he had been robbed of a valuable piece of silk by one of the Sipahis of my guard. I naturally felt indignant at the supposed misconduct of the Sipahi, as tending to degrade both myself and the character of the native army in the eyes of foreigners, and immediately entered into a careful investigation of the circumstance. The Hindoo could produce no evidence, while the innocence of the accused was attested by numerous witnesses. I had made up my mind as to the falsehood of the charge, when I was privately apprised that the Banian was acting by the advice of my friend Gopaldass, the vakeel, who had pointed out to him the probability of my at once paying the value rather than allow the imputation of theft to rest where it was laid. I dismissed the business, therefore, telling the parties that, should I hear more on the subject, I would bring it at once to the notice of the Ameers.

The Hindoo appearing on the following day with the same story, I, accordingly, in the afternoon, informed their Highnesses of the dispute ; adding, that the accusation was against one of a body, the meanest soldier of which had a character indispensably necessary to his remaining an hour in the service, that they were the men who fought the battles of the state, and that it was in-

cumbent on me to protect their reputation: and I requested that an inquiry might be instituted, promising, in the event of there being any proof against the Sipahi, that he should be sent to Bhooj, where he would meet with the severest punishment. The Ameers heard me with great politeness; expressed their regret at the circumstance; and begged to know who the person was that had given me so much annoyance. I replied, a Hindoo. The name acted like a charm: Mourad Ali stopped me at once by pronouncing any investigation perfectly unnecessary, and forthwith issued his commands that the offender should be confined and admitted into the bosom of the faith; an order which I observed several persons run with alacrity to perform. On my remonstrating against this extremity, his Highness replied with a savage grin, "You do not know the Hindoos of Sinde; they are all blackguards and rascals." The catastrophe in this case, however, was luckily prevented; and I am happy to add, that I had influence enough with Wullee Mahommed to obtain the release of the culprit unknown to the Ameers.

The bigotry which leads to these cruel excesses, betrays itself also in an unbounded and superstitious respect for the Seyuds, or descendants of the Prophet. The religious awe evinced by the Hindoo for his Brahmin priest is not more profound or abject than the veneration in which this tribe is held in Sinde. The meanest wretch, who can boast

his origin from the holy stock, enjoys a place in society higher than temporal rank can bestow. Among the crowds who came to me for medicine all readily gave place to a Seyud; and the only persons I ever saw admitted to any degree of intimacy with the Ameers were of that privileged class. No person under any provocation would dare to abuse or strike one, unless at the risk of being torn to pieces by the populace; and in consequence of the privileges and immunities they enjoy, they flock from all the neighbouring countries into Sinde, where, besides being the most insolent, useless, and lazy members of the community, they exercise a most baneful influence on the minds, and are a constant tax on the purses, of the deluded inhabitants. Fuqueers, or religious mendicants, infest the public highways at Hyderabad; demanding alms in a tone of overbearing insolence, indicative of the power they possess, and affording a melancholy evidence of the moral degradation of the people.

The evils of intolerance I have mentioned, are so glaring that it is scarcely possible for a stranger to be a week in the country without their being obtruded on his notice. The Hindoo vakeel who accompanied me, was the butt of every species of ribaldry and wit that could enter the imaginations of my conductors, or their followers, on the march; and amongst the many who secretly pray for such a consummation, none seemed to

have a more devout wish to see the British colours flying on the bastions of Hyderabad, than the Hindoos of respectability; who, uninvited, entered on the subject of their grievances, and discoursed largely of the cruelties and indignities to which they were subjected.

The Ameers of Sinde are less sunk in sensuality and indulgence than Mahommedan princes in general. They seem to be men of too proud and ambitious a turn of character to be much influenced by the allurements of pleasure, or it is more probable that these have already palled upon their taste. Mourad Ali asked me, on one occasion, whether I had any objection to his taking *daroo*, a word which I understood in its usual acceptation of ardent spirits; and I was proceeding to explain that it would be better to avoid all stimulants, and particularly wine, for the present, when he abruptly interrupted me by begging that I would not use the name of the forbidden juice of the grape in the presence of a true believer. I found afterwards that his Highness only meant a pomegranate; and although this anecdote may give an impression of display before a large assembly, still I believe it is well ascertained that the Ameers never indulge in intoxicating drugs or liquors. They have been known to dismiss persons with disgrace from their presence, who have appeared before them redolent of wine; and Bahadoor Khan Cokur, a Beloche chief of high birth in the service

of Mourad Ali, was suspended from his employments for a considerable time, from having been once seen in a state of intoxication. The Ameers universally objected to take medicine in the shape of tinctures from the spirits they contained. There is not a hookah to be seen at their court, nor do any of the family ever eat opium. It were to be hoped, that this temperance on the part of the rulers had had a proportionate effect on their subjects; but experience obliges me to declare, that most of the soldiery, and many of the courtiers, are addicted to every species of indulgence that can either enervate the mind, or debilitate the body. The eating of opium is as common in Sinde as in Cutch; and I found no present more acceptable than a few bottles of brandy, and no annoyance more intolerable than incessant indirect applications to repair the ravages of unlawful disease, or to renew the powers wasted in luxury and debauch.

The Ameers commence business about two hours before day-break, when each holds a private levee to listen to complaints, and adjust the affairs relative to his peculiar province. It is on this occasion only that they wear turbans. About sunrise they repair to their apartments to dress, and appear shortly afterwards in durbar, where the whole family regularly assemble, and where all state proceedings are transacted. The letters which have arrived during the night or preceding day, are then thrown before them in a heap, and

the time is passed in reading or giving orders regarding them, and in conversation, till ten or eleven o'clock, when they withdraw to their morning repast. At two o'clock they again show themselves abroad, and remain together till dark, when they separate for the night to their respective places of abode. My visits were always during the public durbars; nor had I, on any occasion, an opportunity of conversing privately with any one of the principal chiefs. On retiring to their residences the younger princes held separate courts of their own, where every thing formed a contrast to the stately ceremonial of the elder Ameers. There all restraint was thrown aside; and we visited the stables, saw boar-baiting, fencing, ball practice, wrestling, and many other species of amusement.

During the lifetime of Meer Futteh Ali, and while the convulsions by which the family gained the supreme power were recent, extraordinary precautions were taken to prevent treachery or combinations against themselves. The four brothers used to eat together, and sleep in one chamber, which was lighted only at the door way, while numbers of saddled horses and attendants were kept ready for any emergency. The continued tranquillity of Sinde for the last thirty years has at length lulled its rulers into confidence; but their vigilance is still such as in a great measure to bid defiance to conspiracy. They do not now, as formerly, dine and repose in the same room; but they

all pass the night in halls outside of their apartments, with their arms by their sides, and watched by trusty retainers.

Their distrust of each other is one of the most singular features in their character. I have already mentioned, that Mourad Ali's illness had confined them all within the fortress of Hyderabad for many months; and when they proceed on their hunting excursions, they are too cautious to leave any one of their number behind. It was merely by lingering a few miles in rear of the rest that Meer Sobdar found means to escape to Islamkote and there raise his rebellion. Power under such a system of suspicion and alarm is scarcely to be envied; and I gave Mourad Ali credit for the justice of a sentiment he once feelingly expressed to me, and which he had copied, no doubt, from some Persian author,—that there is a heavy load, like lead, on the head of princes, the full misery of which none but princes can appreciate; a fair confession, that his was any thing but a bed of roses.

In their manners at the durbar, the Ameers were courteous, but for the most part haughty and reserved; nothing approaching to familiarity appeared to exist between them and their most favoured servants. When a chair was brought in for me, two couches were at the same time introduced, one of which was occupied by the principal chiefs, and the other by the young princes. All the

courtiers and attendants sat at a respectful distance on the floor, or stood outside; and I never, on any occasion, except once or twice when Meer Ismael Shah and some favourite peerzadas or saints were allowed the honour, observed even their highest officers permitted to sit on the same elevation with themselves. The Ameers generally came into their levee together, and left it at the same moment. During my stay at Hyderabad, all the durbars were held in Mourad Ali's apartments, on account of his illness; but it is customary for them to meet alternately at each others' residences.

I have already, in describing my first interview, alluded to their dresses, and the general style of their court. With the exception of the Cashmere shawls, and the loongies or sashes of silk and gold, which I formerly mentioned, and which are made at Tatta, the cloths worn were generally of English manufacture. As the cold season advanced, and they were obliged to lay aside the muslin tunics, their Highnesses used to appear in robes or cloaks made of the most valuable description of Cashmere shawls, gorgeously embroidered with gold lace, and lined with the black fur of Candahar. On other occasions, their apparel consisted of European damask silk, or satin lined with some warmer material, and quilted with cotton, so as to be nearly impenetrable to a sword or a dagger. One of the best-dressed men at their

court, their uncle, Meer Mahmood, a particularly handsome old man, wore a surcoat of flowered pink satin. Meers Kurm Ali and Nusseer Khan were differently attired almost every morning, and I have often recognized a favourite servant clothed in the habiliments they had worn a few days previously.

But of all the things which are calculated to engage the attention of a stranger on visiting the court of Sinde, none will excite his surprise more, or is really more worthy of observation, than the brilliant collection of jewels and armour in possession of the Ameers. A great part of their immense treasure consists in rubies, diamonds, pearls, and emeralds, with which their daggers, swords, and matchlocks are adorned, and many of which they wear as rings and clasps on different parts of their dresses.* The fall of the Cabûl monarchy has reduced to indigence and ruin most of the princes and nobility of that kingdom, and has forced them to part with ornaments of great value, many of which have been bought up, at low prices, by persons sent by the Ameers to take advantage of their necessities. Merchants, with precious stones, are encouraged to visit Sinde from

* The Ameers have still in their possession the emerald alluded to by Colonel Pottinger, larger than a pigeon's egg; but what is that compared to the one mentioned in the description of the famous peacock throne, which was cut in the shape of a parroquet, as large as life?

all parts of Asia, in consequence of the ready market they meet with at the capital for their valuables ; and one or two Persian goldsmiths are engaged at court, where they work in enamel, and contrive expedients to display the jewellery of their masters to advantage. The art of enlaying letters of gold on steel has also been brought to the greatest perfection by these artisans.

The Ameers have agents in Persia, Turkey, and Palestine, for the purchase of swords and gun-barrels, and they possess a more valuable collection of these articles than is probably to be met with in any other part of the world. I have had in my hand a plain unornamented blade which had cost them half a lac of rupees. They estimate swords by their age and the fineness of the steel, as shown by the *johar* and *awb*, or temper and watering. One, which Kurm Ali presented to me, bears the Mahommedan date 1122, (A. D. 1708,) and was valued in Sinde at two thousand rupees. The armoury of their Highnesses is graced with swords which have been worn by almost every prince renowned in Asiatic story ; and I have had the honour of trying the balance of weapons which had been wielded by Shah Abbas the Great, Nadir Shah, Ahmed Shah Doranee, the present king of Persia, and many other equally illustrious personages. The blades are embellished with inscriptions in gold, which, in the case of those belonging to members of the family who are Sheahs, usually consist of short prayers to Huz-

rut Ali for aid and protection, and in that of the others, of verses from the Koran or appropriate quotations from Persian authors. On all belonging to Kurm Ali I observed the words *Bunduh Ali Mahommed*, "the slave of the descendants of Mahommed Kurm Ali;" and on that he gave me, besides a couplet from the Shah Nameh, there was one of his own composition, together with a stanza from the pen of Wullee Mahommed. Meer Nusseer Khan presented me with one on which were inscribed six lines written by himself for the occasion, and where my own name is introduced.

The swords do not appear heavier than our common English sabres, but they are differently balanced, and I have seen one of the young princes with a single stroke cut a large sheep in two pieces; a feat which somewhat reminded me of that told of the famous Saladdin in Sir Walter Scott's "Tales of the Crusaders." There is a certain mode of striking with them, which requires great practice and dexterity, as one of Meer Ismail Shah's sons broke a very valuable blade in a similar experiment a short time before I went to Hyderabad. Our English cutlery, which is so generally esteemed throughout Europe, has little value in the estimation of the Ameers. They had never heard of a sword from Great Britain of any price; and I raised their curiosity to the utmost by informing them that his Majesty had lately present-

ed one of his great lords (the Duke of Northumberland,) with one worth a lac of rupees.

They seemed to be fully sensible, however, of the superiority of our gun-locks, a number of which they entreated me to beg the government to procure for them. I saw several expensive and highly finished fire-arms which had been presented to them, from time to time, by our authorities in Inda, thrown aside as useless, without their locks, which had been removed to be put on their own fowling pieces. For the shape and appearance of the latter I must again refer to the frontispiece to Pottinger's Travels. Those belonging to the Ameers resemble the two there delineated, with the addition of being highly ornamented. The barrels, which are all rifled, are chiefly brought from Constantinople; they are about double the length of ours, and of a very small calibre. The Sindians never use small shot, and they place no value on pistols or detonating locks. When they observed that their jewels and armour excited my admiration, some of them made a point of appearing differently decorated every day, and always handed me their swords for examination.

The histories attached to these, many of which had passed through generations of kings, together with local subjects, formed the chief part of our conversation, though it often took a more interesting turn. It would be impossible for me to fol-

low the Ameers in all their ideas and opinions as developed by their discourse; but I shall endeavour, as far as my memory serves me, to recount a few particulars. They were evidently unwilling at first to say any thing regarding India; but when they found that I had no objection to gratify their curiosity they became extremely inquisitive. The revenues of our empire seemed especially to claim their attention; and many were the attempts made to ascertain from me the exact amount paid by the *Ijaradars*, or Farmers of Hindostan, as they designated the Honourable Company, to the king of Great Britain, for their lease of the country. My explanation on this subject proved far from satisfactory. When I stated my belief that there was little or no surplus revenue either to the king or company, and that the expenditure of some of the governments was greater than the receipts, Kurm Ali exclaimed with astonishment, "How is that possible? Your power extends over five mighty kingdoms." I replied, that it was true, the territory was immense, but that our system was different from that of the Mahommedans and Mahrattas, who lived only for themselves and their own generation; that we were making laws for future ages, and although we personally did not profit, still our children and the posterity of the ryots would know the advantage of our policy. In the justice of this they seemed ready to acquiesce, for they remarked that

it was by our intellectual superiority alone we held India.

On the subject of Bhurtpore they asked several questions, and amongst others the cause of our having taken it. I answered that the Rajah had brought his misfortunes entirely on himself by an insolent and overbearing conduct, which it was impossible for a great government to submit to from any state; and that the proud fortress once called Bhurtpore, was now levelled with the dust. To this observation, which might have conjured up some uneasy anticipations in their own minds, they rejoined, that every kingdom we had conquered was divided in itself, and that no instance had yet occurred of our having had to contend with one where prince and subjects were united in a common cause. The Ameers, no doubt, indulged the illusion, that their's was the happy principality which would, with one accord, resist a hostile invader; but I referred them to the history of all the conquests of Hindoostan whether the courtiers had not invariably deserted their sovereign when he was likely to be unfortunate.* To the Bur-

* "But what contributed most to weigh down the scale of conquest was the degeneracy of the Patans, effeminated by luxury, and dead to all principles of virtue and honour, which their corrupt factions and civil discord had wholly effaced; it being now no shame to fly, no infamy to betray, no breach of honour to murder, and no scandal to change parties."—Ferishta.

mese war they also once alluded, and remarked that many of our troops had perished in that struggle ; to which I replied, that it had been by the climate, and added, what they either did not know, or were unwilling to allow, that the peace had been brought about by the cession of large tracts of country, and a considerable payment in money.

But no topic was so interesting to the Ameers as that of Cutch ; to which they repeatedly referred, and respecting which they made the most minute inquiries. They all spoke of it as a province which would make the best hunting-forest in the world, and requested me frequently to describe the mode of sport, and particularly hog-hunting, followed by English gentlemen in that country. Their admiration was at its height when I informed them that in a single district above sixty wild hogs had been killed by a small party of officers in the course of a month. One day they observed, that, as the government probably required at other stations the troops composing the Bhooj brigade, they would garrison Cutch for us with five or six thousand Beloches, as a token of friendship ; a proposal which, I believe, would have been communicated in a letter through me, had I not evinced marked indifference concerning it.

They often descanted on the disadvantages we had suffered by taking such a wretched country into our hands, which cost us more than it pro-

duced ; and they told me once, that, if government would transfer the sovereignty of it to them, they would provide the security of the richest merchants for the regular payment of a tribute equal to the present subsidy. I had the curiosity to inquire how they would profit by such an arrangement, even if it were practicable, and found it to be their opinion that the revenues were embezzled by the ministers of the Rao. On my assuring them that there was really very little wealth in Cutch, Mourad Ali intimated, that he could find means to extract some. As they appeared so interested, I entered into an explanation with them to show the respect we had for treaties, which, whether injurious or not, we were bound by honour to maintain ; and surprised them, perhaps, by adding, that we would waste our blood and treasure as readily in the defence of Cutch, as of the richest and most productive of our dominions.

Regarding the war between Russia and Persia, and even the capture of Tabreez, intelligence of which arrived when I was at Hyderabad, they expressed no concern. The Sikh, as they termed Runjeet Sing, they generally spoke of disrespectfully, and once mentioned to me, in an indignant manner, that he would not allow one of the faithful to approach within several feet of him. With respect to the affairs of the Punjab, Mourad Ali asked me whether our government did not supply money to Seyud Ahmed Shah, who is now carry-

ing on the Mahommedan crusade against the Sikhs: I expressed my wonder that any person could form such an idea, since it was notorious that the Seyud was fighting solely for the faith; but my answer did not seem to convince them, as they remarked, that though the Bombay government, whose servant I was, knew nothing of the matter, it was probably very well understood at Bengal.

Of His Majesty and the royal family, and many other circumstances connected with England, they spoke with a knowledge which surprised me, and once observed, that English sailors and Beloche soldiers were the best in the world. They knew the character and fall of the Emperor Napoleon, but were ignorant of his death. Of vaccine inoculation they had heard by report; and when I explained its advantages, they declared their intention of establishing it in Sinde, and requested me to assist them with the means of doing so. Among other subjects I told them of the grand discovery of steam-engines; but in this, and respecting the revenues of Great Britain, they evidently considered I was making use of a traveller's privilege. They were obviously much gratified to find I had a knowledge of the history of their family, of which they are exceedingly proud; and on my being shown the sword of their ancestor, Meer Bejur, whose murder occasioned the overthrow of the Calora dynasty, they were equally astonished and pleased to hear me mention

the circumstance of his pilgrimage to Mecca, and the treachery which caused his death.

One thing alone raised a frown on the countenances of the Ameers. In conversing one day with their minister, on the state of Cabûl, I had occasion to refer in his presence to a large map of Hindoostan, and he mentioned the circumstance to their Highnesses, who begged to see so great a curiosity. I accordingly took it to the durbar, and explained its nature to them. Nothing could exceed their wonder when I traced from stage to stage, with my finger, the various routes through Sinde, together with those to Jessulmere and Lahore; and stated that I could travel throughout the whole of their dominions, by the assistance of the map, without asking the way to a single village. It was probably injudicious, but I could not at the time resist the impulse, of covering the whole of their paltry territory with my hand, and pointing out to them the boundaries of our great and glorious empire in India. They affected perfect indifference at first, and pretended that they knew as much of our provinces as we did of their's; but they were extremely grave during the remainder of the interview, and I understood afterwards, from some persons who remained behind me at the levee, that they again reverted to the subject of the map, without concealing their chagrin and vexation that the *Feringees* knew every thing.

In the preceding paragraphs I have endeavour-

ed to give some idea of the manners and habits of the Ameers of Sinde, while they are resident at their capital. Once or twice a month, when they are all in good health, they pay visits to their different shikargahs, or preserves for game; and as they are attended, on these occasions, by large retinues, and never previously announce in which direction they mean to travel, they thus combine, with a passion for the chace, a species of policy which enables them to keep their several districts in awe. They take the field with hawks, dogs, &c., but their mode of killing game would have little charms for an European sportsman. They never expose themselves to the sun, but remain comfortably seated in a house till the deer or hog is forced to come before them to a small tank or well to drink, when they shoot him deliberately, and receive the acclamations of their followers.

The shikargahs are large tracts of jungle so carefully inclosed as to prevent the egress of all quadrupeds; and when their Highnesses proceed to them, all the wells, except the one in front of their tents or bungalows, are closed up, and the game is hunted till dire necessity obliges it to seek for water, at the risk of life, in the manner above alluded to. Sometimes they station themselves in temporary buildings, between two shikargahs nearly adjoining, in one of which several hundred matchlockmen are posted to expel the frightened animal, which, in endeavouring to es-

cape through a passage made for the purpose into the neighbouring preserve, is intercepted and killed by the Ameers.

They never hunt on horseback, but sometimes, though rarely, go out a deer shooting on camels; none, except themselves, are permitted to fire at any game; and there is scarcely a sporting excursion which does not cost them the lives of two or three of their subjects, either from false aiming on their own part, or the fury of boars, &c. driven desperate. All the grandees in Sinde, when they appear in public, are attended by their bazbans or falconers, with hawks, some of which are of great value. I saw a bird which had cost Kurm Ali two thousand rupees; and his Highness presented me with one of a scarcely inferior price. The best are, I understand, brought from Turkistan, and the northern parts of Cabûl.

In Sinde, as in all oriental countries, the courtiers exist only in the presence and favour of the prince, and depend entirely on the Ameers for their rank and situation in society. Of them it is unnecessary to say much. They do not carry with them to their own houses that neatness of dress and respectability of deportment, which are exacted from them at the durbar; and as they are generally extremely poor, (the whole wealth of the country being in the hands of the rulers,) they have no means of making display. The favourites of the Ameers may be distinguished by

gold-mounted swords, which are the highest honorary distinctions conferred by the Hyderabad durbar. It is contrary to the usage of the court to wear side arms ornamented with any of the precious metals not presented by their highnesses; and as they are rather sparing in their favours, the honour is much appreciated. For very high services, the Ameers sometimes, though rarely, give one of their valuable blades adorned with diamonds.

It would be in vain to expect independence of feeling where all are really so dependent. The Sinde courtiers can only retain their places by implicit obedience, and the most fawning adulation to their superiors. Their propensity to flatter strangers, and even each other, is ludicrous to an European. Scarcely two persons of the higher rank ever met together in my presence without bespattering each other with the most fulsome compliments, and both joining in exalting me to the skies, by the most far-fetched and hyperbolic praises. Their ceremonious formality is truly distressing. The same inquiries after my happiness, health, &c. were seldom repeated less than four or five times in the course of a visit. The moment I rose from my chair every man of the company did the same, and continued standing till I again sat down, when, after an exchange of salutations between all present, they followed my example. In this respect, they are,

I presume, mere copyists of the courts of Cabûl and Persia.

From what I have said of the character of Meer Mourad Ali, it will be obvious that he is not a prince much guided by the counsels of others ; nor is it easy, with a man of his cold and unsociable disposition, to ascertain on whom he really bestows his favour. None know the workings of his gloomy soul, and scarcely any can claim a share in his confidence ; but there are, nevertheless, two individuals who, from various causes, are of great importance at the court of Sinde, and who demand particular mention in this narrative. I allude to Wullee Mahommed Khan, and Seyud Ismail Shah, the chief ministers of the Ameers, of whose characters I shall attempt to give a brief outline. They both receive high salaries from government, and have palanquins and bearers maintained for them ; an honour which they share unrivalled by any other subject in the country.

The Nuwab, Wulle Mahommed Khan Lagharee, is by the Ameers themselves termed the vizier of Sinde, and, next to the principal members of the Talpoor family, must be considered the most important personage under their government. Being himself the head of a powerful Beloche tribe, which contributed in the field to the elevation of the present rulers, he has ever since been their faithful and able servant, and seems

to enjoy not only the entire confidence of his masters, but, what is rare indeed in a despotic government, the esteem and respect of the people. He is the adviser of the Ameers in the management of the internal affairs of the state; and, by his adroitness and mild demeanour, has it often in his power, and seldom loses an opportunity, to avert or mitigate the effects of those shocks of tyranny and oppression which emanate from their durbar.

A sincere regard for the interest of his masters has taught this old and respectable individual the necessity of maintaining a friendly intercourse with the British government; and it is to his advice I owe not only my visit to Sinde, but the wish of the Ameers to detain me. Wullee Mahommed Khan must have attained the age of seventy; and it is to be feared, therefore, that death may soon deprive the Ameers of their best servant, and the people of Sinde of their kindest protector. His son, Ahmed Khan, a dissipated young man about thirty years of age, possesses none of the virtues of his parent. The Nuwab is a poet of no mean excellence; and, although his verses are filled with adulation, it would be unfair to detract from his merits on this account, or to condemn him for following the example of almost every Persian writer. He has composed also several large folios on the subject of medicine, gleaned chiefly from the dreams and theories of

the ancients, but which, being supposed original, have gained for him the character of a sage in Sinde. Amongst his works I must not omit to mention a small book on the cure of diseases written in the name of Meer Mourad Ali, the merit of which is claimed by that prince.

Meer Ismail Shah is the adviser of the government in its foreign, as the Nuwab Wullee Mahommed Khan is in its domestic policy. He is second only to the latter in the estimation of the Ameers, who, in addition to their religious reverence for him as a descendant of the Prophet, entertain an exaggerated idea of his judgment and experience. He is the son of a Persian who immigrated about fifty years ago into Sinde, where he was attached to the last Caloras as a state-physician, and afterwards siding with the Talpoors, received employment in their service. Ismail Shah is well known as the ambassador to Bombay in 1820, when it was expected war would be declared between the governments. The hospitality he then experienced, and the munificence of Mr Elphinstone, formed the chief topics of his conversation with me; but it is notorious that he is faithless in the extreme, and not at all favourably inclined to the British interest. Meer Ismail is a man of respectable appearance and good address, about fifty years of age, has the silly vanity to pretend ignorance of the common language of Sinde, and never speaks or allows himself to be addres-

sed in any other language than Persian. He has been occasionally employed at the court of Cabûl, where he informed me he was envoy at the period of Mr Elphinstone's mission; and he is no doubt thoroughly skilled in the system of intrigue and chicanery, so requisite in an Asiatic cabinet. He has several sons holding important situations under the government, one of whom was lately at Bombay as vakeel, and another is the representative of the Ameers at Shikarpoor. He himself receives a monthly salary of eleven hundred rupees as physician, which is the best paid appointment at Hyderabad, but his prescriptions are little attended to by the Ameers.

A spirit of rivalry may naturally be supposed to exist between the two great officers of the Sinde durbar; and this is not confined merely to attempts to supplant each other in the favour of their masters, but extends to particulars which would excite a smile among European politicians. They are envious of each other's fame as men of science, and especially as physicians. Both are authors, and exceedingly vain of their own productions; and, without deciding here on their respective merits, on which I always evaded giving an opinion to themselves, I may observe that the Ameers have shown a correct discrimination of character, in awarding to Ismail Shah the emolument, and to the Nuwab the reputation. In their moral

qualities they can bear no comparison. The Ameers repose implicit confidence in Wullee Mahommed, but doubt, with justice, the integrity of his rival.* The former is upright and charitable, the latter proud and penurious; the one esteemed, the other feared; the Seyud owing his elevation and importance chiefly to birth and popular prejudice, and the Khan to a long life of fidelity and virtue, which, it is some credit to Sinde to say, have met their reward.

Next in importance to these officers are a few courtiers who exert a personal influence, from being constantly in private attendance on the Ameers, or as leaders of Beloche tribes. The first of this class worthy of notice is Mirza Khoosroo, a Georgian slave, who was purchased about eighteen years ago by Kurm Ali, and whom his master now treats as an adopted child. He is not a favourite of Mourad Ali, and possesses no political consequence, though he was envoy at Bombay in 1823. He is a man of quiet retiring character, and is known in Sinde as the author of Persian verses, the merit of which he is willing to yield to Kurm Ali, who has considerable vanity as a poet.

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* In the letter of advice Mourad Ali had prepared for his children, alluded to in page 52, he cautioned them to beware of Ismail Shah, but urged them to follow implicitly the advice of Wullee Mahomed.

I requested his Highness one day to favour me with a couplet of his own composition to engrave on a sword, and I observed that he immediately called Mirza Khoosroo to him, and, after some whispering, produced a verse as his own.*

Mirza Bakur is also a young Georgian on whom Mourad Ali seems to bestow favour. Bahadoor Khan Cokur, and Kheir Mahommed Tora, are two noblemen supposed to be high in the estimation of that prince; and his Highness pointed out the former to me as one of the bravest and most distinguished of his followers. They are both chiefs of powerful Beloche tribes, always resident at court, where they enjoy situations of responsibility and emolument, and Kheir Mahommed is mohktarkar, or manager of Mourad Ali's private affairs.

Ghoolam Ulla Laghree, the brother of the Nuwab, has charge of the important fortress of Omerkote,† where it is reported the members of

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* The couplet in question is as follows:—"I am sharper than wisdom from the mouth of Plato; I am more blood-spilling than the eyebrow of a beautiful mistress."

† My brother has the following remark regarding Omerkote:—"I may here mention, that I heard this far-famed oäsis of the desert, the retreat of the Emperor Humaioon, the birth-place of the great Akbar, the source of contention between Sinde and Joodpoor, and in later times, the depository of the riches and jewels of the Ameers of Sinde, is a small brick built fort, the southern face of which was actually thrown down by the late inundation, with walls much lower than Luckput, and without a ditch to protect it, though

the Sinde government have treasure to the amount of several crores of rupees. After obtaining his pre-eminence, Futteh Ali took the immediate precaution of seizing the immense riches of the Caloras; and as additions have been making to the heap ever since, the wealth in possession of the Ameers must now be enormous. Their plan of hording up money, which, as I have already stated, they consider their chief security, has hitherto been successful; but it is most probable that it will end like many schemes of the kind related in history, and be at length turned by some fortunate adventurer against themselves or their family; "an event," as Hume says, "which naturally attends the policy of amassing treasures."

Moonshee Khoosheram is a Hindoo who receives one hundred rupees per month as chief secretary. He has no influence; but all public letters are written by him, and to him is to be partly attributed the ungracious style of some of these communications; for I observed, that notes sent to me by order of the Ameers when he was absent, were much more courteously worded than those dictated by himself. However sparing their Highnesses may be of civility in their written communications to others, they are most particular in exacting it for themselves; and, while on this subject, it may be

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so near a river."—Lieutenant BURNES's *Memoir of the Indus.*

worth mentioning as a trait of their characters, that I was in the durbar when the letters from Sir John Malcolm and Mr Elphinstone, announcing the change of government at Bombay, were presented to them by the native agent; every word in the titles and compliments was carefully weighed and scrutinized, and I was much amused to observe Mourad Ali point out to his brother some expression which he imagined was less respectful in the one signed by Sir John than in the other.

It is foreign to my purpose to say much on the people of Sinde, far less to enter into a detail of their character and peculiarities, which have been described at great length by others.* No estimate

* "The inhabitants of Sinde are a strong and healthy race of men, rather more fitted for fatigue than activity, and are mostly tall and dark complexioned. Those who enjoy ease and indulgence are uncommonly corpulent, which perhaps their great use of milk disposes all to be. The princes are remarkably broad and fat, and many of the Beloche chiefs and officers of their court, too large for the dimensions of any European chair. As rotundity is so much the distinction of greatness, it is admired as a beauty, and sought as an ambition, and prescriptions, therefore, for increasing bulk are much esteemed. The Sindians in their tempers are proud, impatient, knavish, and mean. Placed between Muckran and Hindoostan, they seem to have acquired the vices, both of the barbarity on the one side, and the civilization on the other, without the virtues of either. Their natural faculties are good, and their energies would reward encouragement, but their moral character is a compound scarcely to be described, and still less to be trusted, and fanaticism, superstii-

can be formed of the population, which, if we may credit the information given to Captain Hamilton, was, about the beginning of last century, in the proportion of ten Hindoos to one Mussulman. In this case the knife of circumcision must have made havoc indeed, as the rival sects are now nearly equal, or rather, I believe, the Mahommedan is the more numerous. As the state religion of Sinde is taken from the Koran, so the system of jurisprudence is derived from the same source, and when exercised between two subjects of the more favoured creed, would appear to be pretty fairly administered by the Cadi ; but, as this functionary can listen to no complaints against the government, and holds his situation only by the sufferance of

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tion, and despotism are debasing it more and more every day. There is no zeal but for the propagation of the faith ; no spirit but in celebrating the Eed ; no liberality but in feeding lazy Seyuds ; and no taste but in ornamenting old tombs. Their active diversions are shooting and clapping with their swords, to prove their temper and the strength of their own arms. They are good marksmen with their matchlocks, and inimitably dexterous with the bow and a blunt heavy arrow, which they use for game, and dart in a transverse instead of a straight direction, so that the body, and not the point of the arrow, strikes the object. With these arrows they kill partridges flying, to the right and left, as surely and expeditiously as an European sportsman with a double barrelled gun. All the princes are from great practice incredibly expert both with their guns and bows. In riding, and the use of the sword, the Sindians have no skill, nor have they any exercise peculiar to themselves."—Crow.

the Ameers, it will be evident that he can be no check on their Highnesses, though privileged by his code to be so.

I have in another place given a specimen of the manner in which justice is dispensed to the Hindoos, who for the most part prudently settle their differences among themselves by punchaets, or arbitration, without a reference to the ruling authorities. The Beloches seem generally to take the law into their own hands, and to act on the simple principle of retaliation ; nor do the Ameers often interfere with them, except where individual disputes extend to whole tribes, when they are obliged to settle matters by force or conciliation. A serious quarrel of this sort took place, from a most trifling cause, while I was at Hyderabad, and called for the mediation of their Highnesses, who sent for the contending parties to the durbar in my presence, and with much flattery and address obtained a promise from each to desist.

In no respect were my expectations more disappointed than in the military force of Sinde. Having lived for some time in Cutch amid frequent rumours of attack and invasion, I had, in common with most others in that province, imbibed the idea that there was a powerful body of troops maintained at Hyderabad. It is quite the contrary, however ; and, with the exception of a small corps of Beloches who are kept to garrison the fortress, the armed retainers of the Ameers are few in num-

ber, and contemptible in appearance. Several of the chiefs of the tribes reside constantly at court, and are able to collect, in the course of a few days, by some means resembling the fiery cross used by our own forefathers, their various followers, who at other times are employed in agriculture, and other peaceful occupations. In this manner it is said the government can assemble about forty thousand men, to whom, while in active service, I find by Captain Seton's Report that it allows a pice each *per diem* ; but I presume this must be either a mistake, or a regulation of former times, as I heard of horsemen being entertained at the respectable salaries of thirty rupees *per mensem*. A case might be supposed in which the whole Mahommedan population would rise *en masse ;* but as patriotism is unknown in this quarter of the globe, nothing except a fiery zeal for religion, fanned into a flame by some designing enthusiast, is ever likely to produce such a result.

Though the iron rod of the Ameers has repressed the daring spirit of the military classes of their subjects, and the general tranquillity of the province has left their energies to slumber for a while, they may yet be considered as a body of marauders ready to take arms for any cause which will afford them support, or which offers a prospect of plunder. Like hungry vultures they would almost seem to " scent the battle from afar;" for the train of dissension is no sooner lighted, than war be-

comes their universal cry, and it is incredible in how short a period they flock to their rendezvous. Sobdar's late insurrection was settled in the course of a few days, but not until twenty or thirty thousand volunteers had joined the different standards, and numbers were crowding in hourly when the adjustment took place. In the field, the Sindian soldier has no discipline; and as his pay is generally contemptible, and frequently uncertain, he conceives himself fully privileged to supply his wants at the expence of the villages on his march. He is acknowledged to be brave and hardy, but his reputation is far higher in his own country than any where else. His vanity and gasconading are proverbial: from the general down to his meanest follower in the camp, every man makes his own past and intended exploits, or those of his ancestors, the constant theme of his conversation and contemplation; and it is remarkable with what patience they listen to the empty vauntings of one another. The army of the Ameers, when collected, presents a motley and ill-accoutred assemblage of mercenaries from all quarters; and it is composed chiefly of adventurers who have descended from the mountains of Belochistan, to one of the tribes of which, that of Rind, the reigning house traces its origin.

Horses are brought in great numbers annually from Cabûl and Candahar to Cutch and Bombay, where they are bought by agents for the British

government; and as they all take the route through Sinde, and can be procured there at a very cheap rate, it might be imagined that the Beloche soldiers, who are generally cavalry, would be well mounted. There are no fine horses, however, to be seen, except in the stables of the Ameers; who every year purchase some of the best from the dealers as they pass, and who, besides having excellent studs, all keep an immense number of dogs of good breed, which are also imported from the upper provinces. I saw several large, powerful-looking mules in Sinde, and, conceiving that it might be an object to government to get them for the use of the artillery from that country, instead of from the more distant ports in the Persian Gulf, I made inquiries regarding them, but am afraid they could not be procured at a less expence, or more easily than by the arrangement which at present exists.

The Ameers are, I believe, perfectly aware of the utter hopelessness of any defence they could make, in the event of an invasion by our government. Many circumstances proved to me that "the magic of our name linked with success," and the feeling not to be wondered at, which pervades the eastern world, generally, of its being "the will of God," that, till a certain period, we shall prove victorious in all our enterprizes, have not failed to exert their superstitious influence on the anxious and foreboding minds of the natives. In their attempts to conceal their terror they adopt

means which inevitably lead to a detection of it; such as the vaunting and imperious style of their letters to foreign powers, and their endeavours to impress strangers with an exaggerated estimation of their dignity and importance. Like many men in private life, who contrive for a time to cloak their ignorance under a formal manner and distant deportment, they well know that a closer inspection would infallibly expose their weaknesses; and hence arises their jealousy of our acquiring a nearer or more intimate knowledge of their country or of themselves.

Such flimsy pretences could never blind any individual who has visited Sinde and witnessed the true state of affairs. Of the few walled towns in the province all are contemptible, and scarcely one deserves the name of a fortress. Omerkote, the repository of the wealth of the court, which has so long been supposed unassailable from the report of its being environed by a sandy desert of great extent where no water is procurable, has been ascertained, by late inquiries, to be within a few miles of a branch of the Indus, and utterly untenable. The city of Hyderabad is a collection of wretched low mud hovels, as destitute of the means of defence as they are of external elegance, or internal comfort; and even the boasted stronghold of the Ameers, which surmounts their capital, is but a paltry erection of ill burnt bricks, crumbling gradually to decay, and perfectly inca-

pable of withstanding for an hour the attack of regular troops.* The nobility would, in all probability, and, as is usual with Asiatics, desert their masters in the time of trouble; and although I have no doubt the Talpoor chiefs would themselves bravely perish in defence of their sovereignty and treasures, it is scarcely possible to conceive a more easy, or, as far as the people generally are concerned, a more willing conquest, were our victorious arms turned in that direction, than Sinde would prove, unassisted by any of the countries in the neighbourhood.

Were such an event to happen, as happen in all probability it will, from causes as uncontrollable as those which have led to the already mighty

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* "The fortifications of Hyderabad consist of a high wall and a high citadel, upon which some very heavy guns are planted. The wall is thin, but supported inside by a great depth of earth, partly original and partly piled up, which would make a breach difficult. The citadel is entirely brick work, but very thick, and the figure perfectly circular, of not more than one hundred yards diameter. There is a dry ditch round one side of the fort, and low ground on the other. The circumference of the wall may be three quarters of a mile; it has few embrasures, and no commanding angles, nor outworks. The figure of the fort "comes nearest to an oblong square, but stands upon one side of the extremity of a long and narrow rocky hill, steep in its declivity every way. The country surrounding this rock is an island formed by the Indus, about six or eight miles broad, and twenty or thirty long, well cultivated, and annually inundated by the periodical swell."—Crow.

extension of our empire, there is no district which would better repay the fostering care of a mild and enlightened management than Sinde. The people of that country and our government might mutually congratulate each other and themselves on the advantages they had gained ; and while the one was grateful for the introduction of free institutions and a benignant rule, the other might glory in the acquisition of a valuable and productive addition to its dominions. Agriculture and commerce, which are now languid from ignorance and taxation, would gradually revive and flourish under the new and better order of things; and the local advantages of the province, combined with security to property and impartial justice, would invite settlers from other countries, whose families would recruit the lost population, and whose energies, unfettered by religious bigotry or military despotism, would have full scope, encouragement, and reward. Then the river Indus might once more become the channel of communication and of wealth, between the interior of Asia and the Peninsula of India; while Sinde herself, equally interesting to us from classic association, and from sympathy with her present sufferings, would rise renewed to claim a due importance in the scale of nations, and to profit by the benefits which nature has bestowed upon her.

By the beginning of January, Mourad Ali's health had been perfectly re-established, but

still the Ameers showed no disposition whatever to consent to my leaving Hyderabad, and I ascertained, what I had previously suspected, that they wished to detain me altogether. Mourad Ali had once or twice asked me whether I had any objection to remain with them ; and although I had always evaded his questions by explaining that I was a servant of the government, without whose permission I could do nothing, he had often reverted to the subject, and had requested my opinion whether Sir John Malcolm would agree to my returning, even should I leave Hyderabad for the present. Wullee Mahommed Khan now informed me that he had recommended the Ameers to make the proposal at once to government ; and although they were evidently unwilling to gain their object in this manner, I was privately apprized that some circumstances had occurred which induced them to protract my departure as long as possible.

About the end of December two vakeels arrived from Shah Shuja Ool Moolk the exiled king of Cabûl, and the pensioner of our government at Ludiana, loaded with presents to the Ameers, and making a demand that the district of Shikarpoor should be restored to his majesty, who proposed proceeding there in person to collect followers, with a view to regaining his lost empire. The king's proposal was accompanied by a threat, privately intimated through Ismail Shah, that, if

the Ameers did not immediately accede to his request, it was his intention to transfer his undoubted sovereignty over Sinde to his faithful allies the British, who he declared were preparing to assist him with troops and money in his ambitious enterprises.

The whole message appeared to me from the first an empty bravado on the part of the fallen monarch; but the Ameers, although they had courage enough to reject at once the proposal, felt by no means easy at the appalling intimation which accompanied it, and which conjured up, no doubt, to their recollection many a long arrear of subsidy unpaid, and much harsh conduct to the unfortunate house of Cabûl to be accounted for. Their alarm * was heightened by another circumstance,

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* Tatta is described to have been a place of immense wealth and commerce when Nadir Shah visited Sinde in 1747–8; but if we can believe the following extract from Tavernier's Travels, written about a century before that time, it had even much fallen off in his days. I quote from an Italian edition, the only copy I ever saw of the book, published at Bologna in 1690, and, strange to say, given to me by the Ameers of Sinde, whose servants had taken it from an unfortunate native of Rome, who passed through Hyderabad in the beginning of 1827. The remark about the filling up of the river is also curious. It has no doubt changed its course often; but I question whether it was ever more or less navigable than at the present moment. How unfortunate it is that no one has left an exact account of the distance of Tatta from the Indus in those days. It is now certainly above five

trifling in itself, but which in their jealous minds amounted to "confirmation strong" of combinations against them. About the time the vakeels arrived from Ludiana, intelligence was also received from their agent at Bawulpoor, that an English officer had arrived there, and had been treated by the Khan with great respect. It occurred at once to the Ameers that he had been sent to assist in Shah Shuja's schemes; but, as far as I could ascertain by the most particular inquiries, he was a traveller unconnected with government, who had probably taken that route from Bengal to Europe, and was thus innocently the cause of much terror to the court of Sinde.

Even in the bright days of the Afghaun monarchy, the respect and obedience which the rulers of Sinde paid to their lord paramount, were exceedingly remiss; and their annual tribute to his treasury was seldom yielded till a powerful army had advanced to extort it. It is not from characters like the Ameers that we can expect reverence for fallen greatness; and, accordingly, the few members of the royal family who, since the ruin of the Doranee dynasty, have sought refuge at their capital, have been treated with undisguised

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miles. "At present the commerce of Tatta, which was formerly great, is much diminished, as the mouth of the river is always getting worse, and the sand, by increasing, scarcely gives room for a passage."—*Viaggi di Giov. Battist. Tavernier*, Part 2.

contempt. While I was there, a nephew of the king Timour Shah, passed through on his way to Bombay, to solicit a share in the charity which has been extended to so many of his ill-fated relatives by the British government. He is the grandson of the great Ahmed Shah, but, like most of his house, is now a wanderer without a home. He was too proud to visit the durbar of the Ameers; and they considered that they had shown him hospitality enough by sending him seventy-five Bombay rupees. He had only two attendants, and found an asylum in a mosque like a common beggar. His distress and disappointment were evident when he learned that Mr Elphinstone had left India; and he was so poor as to be obliged to ask me for assistance. I gave him a letter to Captain Walter, by whom he was liberally entertained at Bhooj.

Shortly after leaving Cutch, I had been summoned as a witness to attend a general court-martial at Surat, and it was now announced to me by letters from the prisoner, that the trial could not proceed till I made my appearance. I therefore felt extremely perplexed how to act; for I was unwilling to relinquish an opportunity, which had so unexpectedly offered, of establishing a British influence in Sinde, should it be considered an object; while to the wishes of the Ameers and their vizier I could hold out no encouragement, as I was ignorant of the policy of government, and dreaded the

responsibility of subjecting it to the necessity of an ungracious refusal, were a letter despatched to Bombay at my suggestion. I lost no time, however, in referring the matter by an express messenger to Cutch; but, as the resident was absent, I could obtain no definitive orders without waiting for a considerable interval. It was necessary, without delay, to adopt some course which would meet both emergencies; and I accordingly resolved to propose to the Ameers to leave them for the present, and to return after I had appeared before the court-martial; and, in the meantime also, to ascertain the commands of the Honourable the Governor in Council.

The Ameers met my communication by informing me, that they were making preparations for a visit to Sehwaun, to which they were going in a body, to return thanks at the shrine of a famous saint for the recovery of Mourad Ali's health, and where it was their wish that I should accompany them. I was truly sorry to forego so favourable an opportunity of seeing the country, but I felt it my duty to press the absolute necessity of my departure; and, although they were extremely averse, they at last consented, under an agreement that I would meet them again on their return to Hyderabad in the course of a month or six weeks. I considered that my object was now gained; but I had to appear no less than six or eight days successively, to take my leave; and their Highnesses

still insisted on my deferring my departure for another day. At length, when it could no longer be delayed, they paid me the compliment of asking by which route I should like to return; and as I at once decided on going down the Indus, one of their state barges was got in readiness for me, and their cousin Meer Ghoolam Shah, the grandson of Bejur Khan, mentioned in a preceding part of this Narrative, was ordered, as a great mark of respect, to accompany me to the place of embarkation.

On the morning of the 21st of January, I paid my last visit at the durbar of the Ameers, and the adieus on both sides were, I believe, not unmingled with regret. Their Highnesses expressed themselves more than ever thankful; and I had an opportunity of reiterating my acknowledgments for the continued hospitality and respect I had experienced in Sinde. I was accompanied to the river side, a distance of about five miles, by several of their chief officers, and amongst these, by my old friend Wullee Mahommed, who presented me with a copy of his poetical works at parting, and who, unknown to me, had sent several articles which might contribute to my convenience among my baggage. Having embarked at twelve o'clock on board the boat which was prepared for me, together with some officers, whom the Ameers had deputed to attend me, we immediately weighed anchor, and continued a delightful voyage at the rate of about three

miles an hour till evening, when we moored for the night near Triccul. The barge was a large flat-bottomed vessel, resembling a steam-boat in appearrance, fitted up with the greatest attention to comfort, and supplied, as usual, with every necessary and luxury the country could afford, for my attendants and myself. On the deck were erected two wicker bungalows, one of which, destined for my accommodation, was as large as an officer's tent, and nearly of the same form, being covered with scarlet cloth, and lined inside with chintz. A fleet of smaller boats accompanied us, having on board the horses, camels, &c.

By day-break on the 22d, we again glided down the stream, and arrived opposite Tatta at night-fall. I had omitted to inform the Ameers of my wish to visit that famous city; but this, I was resolved, should not prevent my taking advantage of so favourable an opportunity to do so. On the morning of the following day I accordingly rode to it, a distance of about six miles from the river, through a woody country, and passed hurriedly along the streets to the large mosque built by the Emperor Aurungzebe, which I was most anxious to see. The officers who were with me expressed no objection to my visiting the city; but as they had received no orders from the Ameers, they declined dismounting from their horses, while I was engaged in a hasty glance at the different objects of interest; and I was constrained to return to the boat, having seen only

enough to excite my curiosity without gratifying it, and not having had an opportunity of conversing with a single inhabitant. I was for a few minutes in the house erected by Mr Crow, formerly commercial agent in Sinde, a large building in the native style, situated near the centre of the town, from the roof of which I had an extensive view of the surrounding scenery. Tatta still retains many memorials of its ancient grandeur. The extent of ground which it covers is immense; and the remains of tombs and mosques which are to be seen all around, would almost warrant a belief in the tradition of the people, that it was once twelve Sindian coss, or about thirty English miles in circumference. It was there that I saw the only houses built of stone in Sinde. Unlike those of Hyderabad, the buildings of Tatta are generally substantial and elevated, though many of them are now ruinous and dilapidated. *

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* " The celebrated river, which Europeans denominate the Indus, is called by the Hindoos Sindh, and gives its name to the country, though the part which lies on the west side from Hali Ghundh to the sea is, for the sake of distinction, termed Lar. The fertility of the country, when it is exposed to the inundation, is as great as that of Egypt, and subject to less variety and uncertainty; the waters being regular in their return, departure, and quantity, beginning to rise about the latter end of April, and to subside early in September. The breadth of the swell varies according to the nature of the country through which the river passes; in general, I believe, it is felt five miles from the banks on either side, and

On the 24th we again pursued our voyage, and by evening had reached Sitah, a landing-place near Peer Putta, which was visible at about ten miles distance. I met with little worthy of remark on my passage down the Indus; and I have mentioned in the sketch of my route the various towns which attracted my notice. I saw no signs of cultivation except a single field of mustard; the country being a jungle laid waste for hunting forests, or, as in the approach towards Tattah, and on the western side, a desert hilly district. The banks of the river were generally low and shelving; a description, I believe, which applies to those of the Indus for many miles from its mouth. The classic river of Sinde, as far as I saw it, with all its beauties and peculiarities, has been so well and so fully described, in Captain Maxfield's survey and the reports I formerly mentioned, that little is left for me to comment on: it is also unnecessary here to trouble the reader with remarks which have been made by others, and which will be found in the

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in many parts much more, particularly in the Delta. The Indus, as a river, has few merits except its periodical swell; its stream is foul and muddy, and so full of shoals and shifting sands, that flat-bottomed boats only are safe, and scarcely any other are used; its course is extremely crooked, and towards the sea very inconstant. Marks of the caprice of the river abound in the lower country; the most striking of which are, the bed of a large stream now perfectly dry, about five miles from Corachee, and about five miles further, at a place called Guissary, &c."—Crow.

most interesting form, in the writings of Major Rennell, Mr Crow, * and Colonel Pottinger. Some observations which have occurred to me on the geography of Alexander's Route are appended to the present narrative, but I cannot say that I think them deserving of much consideration.

In a preceding paragraph, I have alluded to the moderate means possessed by the Ameers for repelling an invasion of their territory; and a single glance at the Indus will show the easy passage into the very heart of their dominions, which that river offers to a maritime power. The state-barge which conveyed me to Sitah, although flat-bottomed, was, in my opinion, capable of transporting half a regiment; and, during the voyage, we met many others equally capacious. I am ignorant of naval tactics; but I have no doubt that armed steam-boats of small burden might act with peculiar efficacy; and although the shoals and cur-

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* Of the alligators in the river Indus, Mr Crow speaks as follows:—"The alligators should not be forgotten, for they are very numerous, and much respected, not only by the Hindoos, but also by the Mahommedans. The tutelar god of Corachee is a scaly monster, with a train of females and dependants, nourished in the muddy rivulets which flow from the hot springs near Corachee, called Peer Munga, from the name of a saint who formerly resided there. It is singular to see these animals sometimes dozing close to the mouth of the spring where the water is almost boiling hot, and sometimes wallowing in the pools which are perfectly cold."—Crow.

rents in the stream might at first appear an impediment, war would scarcely be declared before the decks of our vessels were crowded with volunteers, well acquainted with the navigation, and ready to contribute their utmost efforts for the subversion of the present government.

At Sitah I was again met by Hyder Khan Lagharee, by whom I was conducted through a productive country to Mugrbhey, and from thence through the desolate tract I have mentioned in the commencement of my narrative, to Luckput, which I reached on the 28th of January.

I had scarcely put my foot on the shore of Cutch, when a letter from the resident, of date the 18th January, authorizing me to remain in Sinde, pending a reference to government, was delivered to me; together with a note from Colonel Leighton, which that gentleman had kindly written me from Surat, to say that the proceedings of the court-martial had terminated, and that my evidence was unnecessary. I lost not an hour in apprizing the Ameers of this information, and again crossed into Sinde on my return to Hyderabad; but I had not proceeded more than thirty miles, when hearing of Sobdar's rebellion, and of the distracted state of the country, I determined to await the answer to my letters. I remained several days at Pallia, a wretched halting-place in the Runn, amid rumours of battles and murder, till the 13th, when I received a message, through the agent, from the Ameers, entreating me

not to venture forward in the present state of affairs; and, accordingly, I deemed it prudent to fall back to Luckput, where I shortly after received the orders of the Honourable the Governor in Council to return to Bhooj.

On learning that government had no wish to effect the establishment of a resident in Sinde, I thought it proper to give the native agent at Hyderabad to understand, that it was likely I would be employed in a particular duty, which would preclude the possibility of my fulfilling my promise of revisiting the Ameers. This was, no doubt, explained perfectly to their satisfaction, as their Highnesses have carried on a constant correspondence with me ever since I left them. Their letters are of the most friendly description, and evidently show a wish on their part to maintain a good understanding with me; nor should I conceal that I believe it is even yet in my power to induce them again to invite me to their court, and to consent to my permanent residence in their capital.

In conclusion, I must lay claim to indulgence for the many imperfections which, I am sensible, may be discovered in this narrative; imperfections which I earnestly hope will rather be attributed to the difficulties I have encountered in drawing it up, than to any neglect or indifference on my part. I cannot but remark also, that, like all persons who undertake to write personal narratives of their proceedings, I have too often been obliged to

speak of myself and my conduct in terms which a fastidious, or probably a very correct feeling, might condemn; but in extenuation, I can only say, that I have been actuated by a sincere desire to represent things as they really are; nor can I accuse myself of having entered more fully into my transactions with the Ameers than was absolutely necessary to exhibit their characters and manners in a proper light. That much has been suppressed which it might have been gratifying to record, may be seen on reference to the letters which the native agent in Sinde addressed to the resident in Cutch, during my stay at Hyderabad, and which have fallen into my hands since my return to Bhooj.

Postscript.*—Since the completion of the foregoing narrative, an event, worthy of record, has occurred in Sinde, and fully realized the anticipations expressed in the preceding pages. Meer Kurm Ali died of fever in December 1828, leaving Mourad Ali, now the only surviving of the four brothers who established the Talpoor dynasty, the sole and undisputed sovereign of the country, with a greater degree of power vested in his single person, than was ever previously shared by the family. The deceased chief is much lamented by his dependants, to whom he had en-

* August 15, 1829.

deared himself by kindness and liberality ; and his death will no doubt cause a considerable revolution in the appearance of the court, the style and dignity of which were supported principally at his cost.

Among the stipulations by which Sobdar's rebellion, in February 1828, was settled, there was a promise sacredly given on the Koran by Kurm Ali, that he would adopt that prince as his heir; but Sobdar, whose weak character is known, sunk into his former insignificance soon after the reconciliation was concluded, and tamely permitted those who had taken the field in his cause to incur the vengeance and cruelty of the chief Ameers. It will not excite surprise, therefore, that on the demise of his uncle, he wanted spirit to claim the treasures to which he was entitled : accordingly, Mourad Ali first contrived, under some pretence, that they should be left in deposit with his late brother's wives, and latterly, he has appropriated them entirely to himself. The territorial possessions of Kurm Ali, with the exception of small estates granted to the young Ameers, have also devolved into the hands of the present ruler, under whose vigorous sway Sinde is likely, for some time at least, to enjoy undisturbed tranquillity.

REMARKS ON ALEXANDER'S ROUTE.

Appended to the copy of the narrative, which I had lately the honour of forwarding to government, were several memoranda respecting the Indus and my route after I left its banks; but, as most of these appear to me neither interesting nor important, I deem it unnecessary now to transcribe them. The following crude observations, or rather fancies, which were hastily committed to paper, during my passage down the river, I shall allow, however, to remain, not only from the natural desire which every person who visits Sinde must feel to say something regarding the Indus, but also as they may assist some other gentleman who may be disposed to prosecute so interesting an inquiry as the geography of Alexander's route. It will be seen that my opinions are founded chiefly on the supposition that the river is now nearly the same as the Greeks found it, above two thousand years ago; than which, I need scarcely say, nothing can be more uncertain. I felt a strong desire to collect a number of facts regarding the Indus; and during my stay in Sinde, as well as since my return, I have examined several natives on the subject; but all I can gather from them are accounts of its inconstancy, and of the many and sudden changes it has undergone, even in the short period of their personal experience. A very intelligent young native of Khorasan, whom I brought with me from Hyderabad, where he had resided many years, in explaining to me this peculiarity of the river, said, it was so little to be depended on, that a person embarking at any of the higher stations with the intention of proceeding by a particular stream to the sea, could not be certain of finding the branch below Tatta he proposed to

navigate, and of the existence of which he had been assured a few days previous to the commencement of his voyage. *

Below Tatta the river Indus divides into two large arms; the Meyraun and the Bugghaur. I followed the course of the latter, which is also named Sitah, and which, at the place of division, is the larger of the two. Four coss below Tatta on the left bank is the small village of Summa. The river is here three quarters of a mile in width. There is nothing of this division of the Indus into two large and nearly equal branches, in Arrowsmith's and Carey's maps; but it is evidently laid down correctly in the quarter-master-general's manuscript one. The Meyraun, although the smaller at first, is described as the main river, and as passing Lahory and Barajay Bunders into the sea; and this tallies exactly with the name and information given to Major Rennell towards the close of last century.

After all, the ancients, I believe, had a better idea of the Delta of the Indus, than the writers of our time. Arrian says, (l. vi. c. 17-18.) "This realm the river Indus incloses, in the form of the Greek letter Δ, and it is much larger than the Egyptian province of that name. Near Patala the Indus divides itself into two vast branches, both of which bear the same name to the sea." Of the correctness of the latter part of this description I have ocular demonstration; and the people declare, that, although the Bugghaur or Sitah, in which I am now sailing, soon divides itself into branches, and disembogues its waters chiefly at Wanyance; yet, with a little difficulty, I could reach Busta Bunder, and consequently the Luckput creek or real easternmost branch of the Indus. Had modern geographers known this, they might have spared themselves the trouble of calling in the assistance of the Nulla Sunkra, to account for Alexander's going down the eastern branch. There is

* The following memoranda were noted down on the Indus, 24th January 1828.

no Nulla Sunkra, as far as I could ascertain, known at the present day in Sinde; and although some one of the rivers may still bear that appellation, or, at all events, had it about the middle of last century, when it is expressly mentioned in the treaty of partition between Nadir Shah and the king of Delhi, it must have been the Phuraun,* the Phulailee, or the Pirsyaree; and in that case we must either believe that the present Tatta, and the ruins in its neighbourhood, Bramina-bad, are not the site of the Patala of the Greeks, or that Alexander went up the river from Tatta to enter and explore the eastern branch of the Indus, of which there is neither an account nor a probability. Nothing is more perplexing than the diversity of names, so common in eastern countries, which is to be attributed to the natives themselves, who have many appellations for the same river, and who are constantly changing them like a matter of fashion.

Were we to suppose that the Macedonian hero navigated the Bugghaur or Sitah, all the circumstances of his second voyage down the Indus might be accounted for without drawing too strongly on our belief. The lake † in which he arriv-

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* The following extract from the treaty of partition would almost lead us to believe that the Nulla Sunkra was the Phuraun or Koree River, the most easterly branch of the Indus, which, at its mouth, divides Sinde from Cutch. "In consideration of the favour which no father shows to a son, and no brother to a brother, I make over to him (Nadir Shah,) all the country to the west of the river Attok, the water of Sinde, and the Nulla Sunkra, which is a branch of the water of Sinde. That is to say, &c. All their fields, villages, castles, towns, and ports, from the first rise of the river Attok, with all the passes and habitations, which the above said water and its several branches comprehends, and surrounds as far as the Nulla Sunkra, where it empties itself into the sea, &c."

† Arrian's description of the lake would almost apply to the Runn, flooded as it was when Alexander sailed down the river. "When he had sailed down the left branch, and was now near the mouth thereof, he came to a certain lake formed by the river, spreading wide over a flat country, or by additional streams flowing in from the adjacent parts, and making it appear like a bay in the sea."—l. vi. c. 20.

ed abounding with fish, as Arrian says, might reasonably be supposed to be the present Luckput creek, which is ten miles wide near the sea. We are told that after passing the lake he made three days' journey * along the coast, ordering wells to be dug as he went. Geographers have differed about his entering Cutch; but supposing he landed near Narraensir, and marched, as Dr Vincent calculates, sixty miles, he must have reached Sandan, in the Abbrassa, and passed through the country now occupied by the villages of Bheyr Jackow and Kotorah, all of which may be said, in consequence, to be classic ground. The situation of Xylenopolis, † as laid down in the maps of ancient geography, is nearer the site of the modern town of Luckput, that is, further up the Creek or Koree river, than Narraensir; and if we believe that Alexander landed there, and still performed a march of sixty miles, he could not have proceeded further than Juckow Bunder.

It is not impossible that Patala may have been situated where the modern town of Jerkh is placed, and in that case Alexander may have navigated the Punjaree branch, which passes by Bunna Laigpoor, Meerpore, and Mugrbhey, and which also would have brought him to the Luckput creek. It is worthy of observation, that I can gain no information of so large a river passing from the Bhuggaur, and termed the Meet Meeraun, as that represented in the quarter-master general's map; and I am assured that at this season it is impossible to reach Mugrbhey by any other route by water, than by the Punjaree. This does not, however, offer any difficulty to Alexander's passing down it in August or September, as then it would be a very large river; and the Residency Moonshee informs me that he and his family embarked at Tatta twenty-

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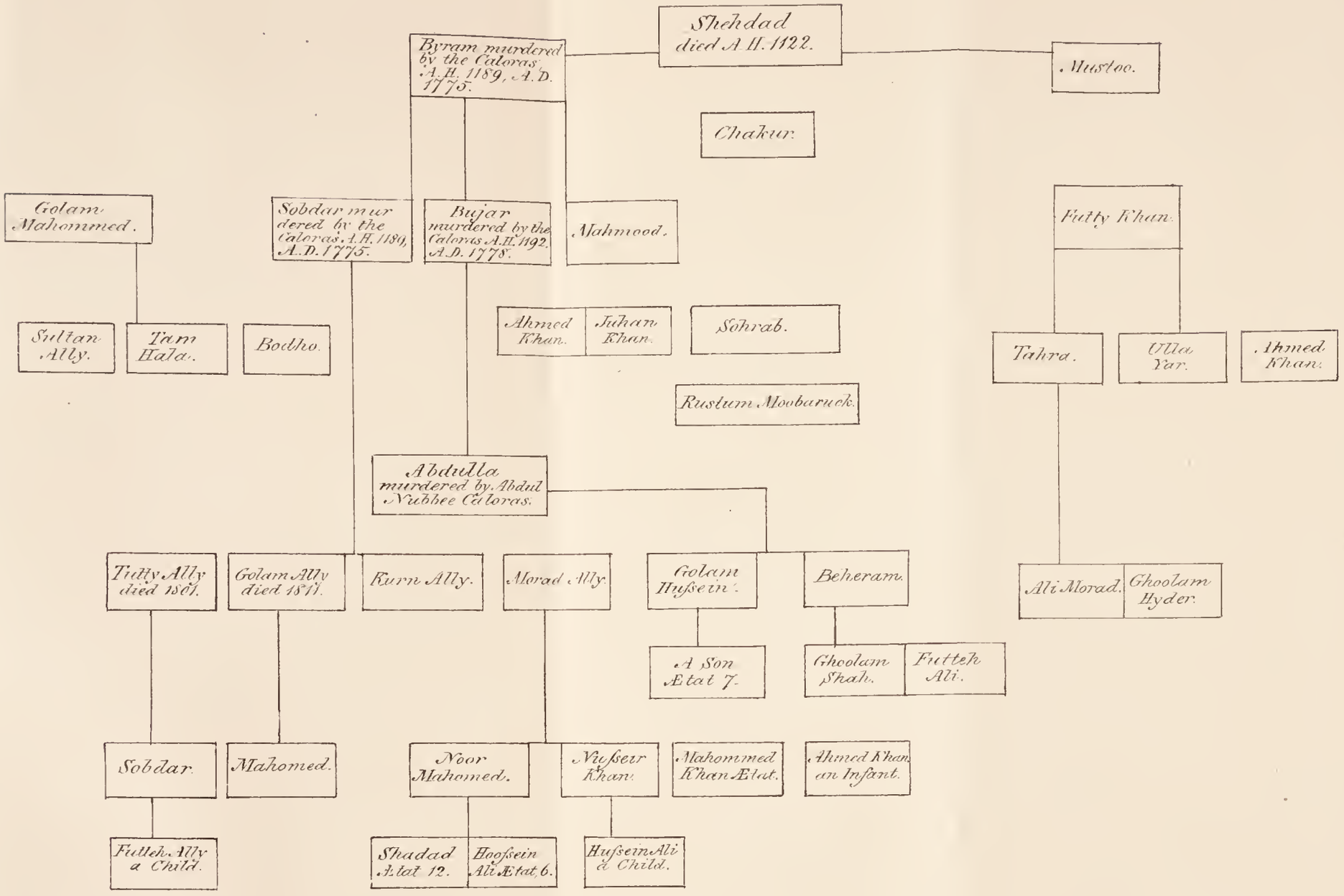
* "Then going on shore with a party of horse, he travelled three days along the sea coast to view it, and try if he could find any bays or creeks to secure his fleet from storms."—l. vi. c. 20.

† Xylenopolis means the city of woods; a most inapplicable term certainly, to the present Luckput and its vicinity.

six years ago, and went down by this identical branch to Cotasir in the Luckput creek. I have not presumed to alter the name given to it on the map, though I must add that the designation of Meet Meeraun, as applied to this river, is, as far as I could learn, unknown in Sinde.

There is no good reason, however, in my humble opinion, to doubt that Tatta is the site of the Patala of the ancients. Arrian says that the word "Patala" corresponded with "Delta" in the Greek; and there is certainly no part of the modern Indus which deserves the name of a Delta but that below Tatta; nor can we suppose that Alexander or his followers, who had seen the Delta of the Nile, would have designated any of the branches higher up, which were all very small at the season of the year he saw them, by such an appellation. Further, as a proof of Patala not being higher up, we are informed that Alexander, after leaving it, in his first voyage down the Indus, followed the course of the right branch (the modern Meyraun no doubt,) and that he had only sailed four hundred furlongs or fifty miles, when his pilots announced to him their approach to the ocean; on hearing which, it is said, he leaped for joy. The ascertained distance from Tatta to the sea is eighty miles; and we can scarcely, therefore, imagine that the pilots, with all their experience in distinguishing the sea air, as stated in history, could have foretold the proximity of the ocean at a greater distance than thirty miles. The only argument against this opinion is, that the tides affect the Indus to about sixty miles from its mouth, and that the Macedonians ought, therefore, to have discovered the ebb and flow, which amazed and alarmed them so much afterwards, long before they were within thirty miles of the sea. But it is not too much to believe that they were carried down by the current, then running four or five knots an hour, many miles without perceiving it; an occurrence which might happen to any navigator, particularly at the season of the year they were in Sinde, when the river is so much enlarged; and that they only became acquainted with the ap-

Genealogical Table of the Salsoor Family.



Ballantine Lithog. Edinr.

(To face Page 142)

palling phenomenon by the violent obstacle which the flow of the tide, accompanied with the south-west monsoon, presented to their progress. This may appear inconsistent, from the fact of Leonatus, with a body of troops on shore, being ordered to regulate his movements by those of the fleet; but the very nature of the country near the mouths of the Indus must have rendered it impossible for him to remain always in sight of the ships.

It is a singular proof of the superior correctness of the ancient geographers, that Arrian's account of the chief mouth of the Indus being about twelve miles wide, has been proved to be strictly consistent with fact by modern discoveries; although Dr Vincent has taken great pains to expose his inaccuracy in this respect, which, he says, may mainly be attributed to exaggeration, caused by fear. *

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* "And as it now approached the sea, the stream appeared enlarged to two hundred stadia."—ARRIAN.—"An exaggeration which no computation of the stadium, no allowance for the overflowing of the river can justify!" —VINCENT.

A

SKETCH

OF THE

HISTORY OF CUTCH.

A SKETCH of a Route from BHOOJ to HYDERABAD,

Traversed by James Burnes, in 1827 8.

Remarks.

The Red represents the Route also the Sites of places added or altered

Cutch with the Eastern Branch of the Indus is a reduced Copy of Lieut: Burnes New Map.

The Letters A.B.C.D. refer to the Memoir which accompanied that Map; also to page 437 of this Volume.

SINDE

HYDERABAD.

TATTA

Hills & Desert.

Mouths of the Indus.

Communication ceases between all these branches.

Fresh Water Marshes.

Salt Desert.

The Jattee.

CHAUCHKAUN.

The Thurr.

The Puchum Island.

The Bunnee.

CUTCH.

GULF OF CUTCH.

BHOOJ.

Scale in British Miles.

Omerpoor. Nusserpoor. Bundeh. Kotree. Koraka. Sonreeaja Wussee. Jumajee Wussee. Simmaouree. Cholee. Pithora ka Morree. Ruyt Neelcewut Mao. Sundeela. Kuttyana. Omercote. Summaulloo. Coorjeauree. Kaullyana. Toonjaujee. Oodeyjah. Sooreydee. Punevha ka Kooa. Sandt. Tricul. Rajakayot. Jerkh. Meeanree. Caboolpoor. Hills & Desert. Tambs. Sandah. Molchund. Nuggoor. Allypoor. Bunnee. Dumaka Gor. Sundara. Joan. Kindharoo. Kheirpoor. Gaura. Hauled. Hitaee. Bundee. Kuddee. Coongal. Lacypoor. Bhadree. Meeanree. Dharra. Shoukee. Baugaka Tunda. Meyrautpoor. Meyrautpoor. Meerpoor. Kittehpoor. Tullye. Chooland Hyderka Jagheer. Budgera. Nowtrar. Shawkapoor. Budder. Bungiha Bazar. Nuggoo River. Lahary Bunder. Peer Pillo. Hyalgwa. Sudukpoor. Chir Jumaderka goi. Kandeka Wufsee. Bolaur. Seerawa. Meopoor. Churryka Tullow. Anklee. Kurre. Khaunpoor. Seyad Bullaurooka Kote. Sudurka Kooa. Khow River. Bhee or Mughribee. Boorie. Himiyut. Pullia. Ally Bunder. Raomaka Bazar. Ballyaree. Shaw Bunder. Dhera. Firr. Sindree. Huronba Bate. Gaunda Bate. Koouree Bate. Lah. Gundah. Busta Bunder. Bunder. Lurput. Kotree. Chungasir. Sando. Daidree. Byrawa. Caffourussee. Godander. Nurrea. Sirwah. Patlooda. Runda. Bunree. Loona. Gudgeonsar. Charee. Ixaree. Kuree Kafsim. Mooroo. Denodur. Berbur. Verana. Bheemasir. Jooreya. Jurrah. Mullul. Nuckutpoora. Sourrodur. Muckna. Bura-Chore. Mooltara. Kotra. Muffull. Mankura. Dunnaw. Kotara. Kotra. Koorbye. Nurrapoor. Kotra. Mhow. Mungpoor. Gadpoor. Bhaee. Bhurra. Chacur. Bundra. Bhaet. Dimpi. Gadora. Bhatee. Veerana. Nurrodeer. Moondra. Lakha. Sirwa. Tyrawarra. Yoonda. Kotree. Sando. Chungasir. Busta Bunder. Bunder. Lurput. Daidree. Byrawa. Caffourussee. Godander. Nurrea. Sirwah. Patlooda. Runda. Bunree. Loona. Gudgeonsar. Charee. Ixaree. Kuree Kafsim. Mooroo. Denodur. Berbur. Verana. Bheemasir. Jooreya. Jurrah. Mullul. Nuckutpoora. Sourrodur. Muckna. Bura-Chore. Mooltara. Kotra. Muffull. Mankura. Dunnaw. Kotara. Kotra. Koorbye. Nurrapoor. Kotra. Mhow. Mungpoor. Gadpoor. Bhaee. Bhurra. Chacur. Bundra. Bhaet. Dimpi. Gadora. Bhatee. Veerana. Nurrodeer. Moondra. Lakha. Sirwa. Tyrawarra. Yoonda.

Continued on the Title Page

PRELIMINARY NOTICE.

THE following "Sketch of the History of Cutch since its connexion with the British Government" was compiled from public documents some years ago, as a supplement to a short history of that country by Captain Charles Walter, and in order to gratify the curiosity of a few friends, who expressed a strong desire to know something of the life and proceedings of the Ex-Rao, Bhalmulgee, a state prisoner in Bhooj. Not having Captain Walter's papers at hand to refer to, I have prefixed a short outline of the early history of Cutch, which consists simply of extracts from official reports by the honourable Mountstuart Elphinstone, lieutenant-colonel Pottinger, political resident at Bhooj, and lieutenant James Holland, deputy-assistant quarter-master general of the Bombay Army.

The following Letter, which has reference to the Historical Sketch of Cutch, may be inserted here:—

Bombay Castle, 22d April 1830.

(POLITICAL DEPARTMENT, No. 526.)

SIR,—I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, dated the 29th March, with a copy of one from Dr Burnes, and to request that you will convey to that officer the thanks of government for the valuable sketch of the recent History of Cutch which accompanied it.

You will also be pleased to express to Dr Burnes the real satisfaction with which government observes public officers devote their leisure to such objects of useful research, and to acquaint him that his clear and concise account of Cutch will be brought to the notice of the Honourable the Court of Directors.—I have the honour to be, &c.

(Signed) T. Williamson,
Secretary to Government.

To the Resident in Cutch.

SECTION I.

INTRODUCTORY OUTLINE OF THE HISTORY OF CUTCH BEFORE THE BRITISH CONNEXION.

About the ninth century of the Christian era, a body of supposed Moosulmans of the Summa tribe emigrated from Sinde, and, under the guidance of five brothers, settled in Cutch, of which by degrees they acquired the complete sovereignty; having either by force or fraud expelled, or subjected to their authority, the aboriginal inhabitants, consisting of three distinct classes, Wagellas, Katties, and Wagum Chowras.

Four or five generations after their settlement, the descendants of the five brothers, assumed the name of Jharejah, * derived from a leader of the tribe named Jharrah, who set his descendants the example of female infanticide, by putting to death his seven daughters in one day.

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* Lieut. Holland's *Account of the Jharejahs.*

Cutch continued tranquil under their sway for many years, until the murder of Humeerjee, the chief of the elder branch of the tribe, by another Jharejah, named Jam Rawul. Khengarjee, the son of Hameerjee, on the death of his father, fled to Ahmedabad to seek the assistance of the viceroy, who had married his sister; and this being readily granted, a force was sent into Cutch to reinstate him, as chief of the tribe, in his rights, which had been usurped by the murderer of his father.

On the approach of the viceroy's army Jam Rawul fled with his adherents to Kattiwar, and founded the town of Nawanuggur, which is possessed by his descendants at the present day; and Khengarjee assumed the sovereignty of Cutch and Moorvee in Kattiwar, with the title of Rao or Rawul, A. D. 1549.

From the time of Khengarjee until that of Rahiden, A. D. 1666, the succession continued according to the law of primogeniture. Pragjee, the third son of the latter prince, murdered his elder brother, Jewajee, and the second brother, Nongaljee, having died in the interim, Pragjee, on the death of his father in 1698, ascended the musnud, to the prejudice of his nephews, Kianjee, the son of Jewajee, and Kallajee, the son of Nongaljee. To the former he gave the command of Moorvee in Kattiwar, which his descendants still retain; the latter retired into the Ubrassa, and took possession

of the principal towns in that district, where his descendants have ever since possessed the chief influence.

Pragjee was succeeded, in the year 1716, by his son, Gorejee, a brave and enterprizing prince, who had distinguished himself by his courage and conduct during the lifetime of his father, but whose reign is not marked by any occurrence of note: he was succeeded by his son, Rao Daisul.

Rao Daisul ascended the throne, A. D. 1719.* At no period was Cutch so respectable as during his rule. He not only repelled four armies despatched from Ahmedabad by the emperor's deputy, to enforce the payment of tribute, but sent his troops across the frontier, and established military posts in Sinde, Parkhur, and Okhamundel, by which steps he checked the predatory horse from the two former quarters, and piracy at the latter.

He also took possession of various towns and villages along the southern coast of the Gulf of Cutch, to which he laid claim on account of his relationship to the Rajah of Moorvee; and, notwithstanding all these expensive exertions, exclusive of many improvements he carried on in his own territories, he died at an advanced age, leaving a treasury well stocked with money.

The latter ten years of his life were embittered by the unkindness of his son, the Prince Lacca,

* Lieut.-colonel POTTINGER'S *Abstract*.

who threw him into confinement, and also had his celebrated minister, Sett Deokurn, assassinated.

Lacca assumed the supreme authority about the year 1745. The character and forms of the durbar were entirely changed by the luxurious and extravagant splendour that were introduced during his reign, which lasted about ten years after the decease of his father. The advanced posts placed by Rao Daisul in Parkhur and Sinde were driven out; and his son, afterwards Rao Gore, rose in open rebellion against him. Of this period Captain Walter says, "The affairs of the state were left in the hands of a succession of incapable ministers, from whom the only qualification required was assent to every plan, however disreputable or atrocious, which could contribute to the Rao's vanity or profusion. Scenes of cruelty and oppression previously unknown became frequent, &c.

Either two or three ministers were put to death during this reign. Poonjah Sett, the son of the celebrated Deokurn Sett, minister of Rao Daisul, was disgraced and dismissed; and the Prince Gorgee retired to, and resided at, Moondrah for the last seven years of his father's life. Forces were frequently sent against him, but were invariably unsuccessful; and although none of the neighbouring powers attempted to invade Cutch in Rao Lacca's time, and his whole strength was therefore disposable, yet it was in vain exerted to subdue the rebellion headed by his own son in the very

heart of his dominions. He also made an abortive attack on the town and fort of Terah in the Abbrassa, the patrimony of Soomrajee Jharejah, in which he was beaten off, and obliged to return to his capital discomfited.

On the death of Rao Lacca, his only legitimate son, in 1760, Gore, was unanimously acknowledged, although his father had tried to secure the accession for one of his numerous illegitimate children. Poonjah Sett, as soon as he heard of Rao Lacca's death, hastened to Bhooj, in the expectation of being made minister; but he was treated with undisguised contempt and hostility; and hearing that a plot had been formed to assassinate him, he fled to Sinde, and the situation he had aspired to was filled by a distant relative of his own called Jeewun Sett.

Cutch was invaded no less than four times by the Sindians during this reign; and on each of these occasions the country was desolated and plundered, although the invaders did not succeed in forming a permanent settlement. Two of the inroads were headed by Gholam Shah Calora in person, and two of them by his son Surufraz Khan. The former wished to compel the Rao to give him his sister in marriage; but after a treaty had been entered into, in which this stipulation stood as an article, it was evaded, and Gholam Shah was glad, on his second invasion, to content himself with the daughter of the chief of Khau-

ker, whose family stood next in pretensions to the throne.

The inability of Cutch to withstand the power of Sinde was clearly demonstrated by these events; for although the Rao engaged mercenaries from the Nuwab of Rahidenpoor, the Jam of Nuwanuggur, the chief of Moorvee, and others, yet even with all this foreign aid, had it not been for Poonjah Sett, (who first instigated Gholam Shah to the attack, but afterwards repented and persuaded him to return to Hyderabad,) it seems from all accounts probable that the Cutch government would then have been subverted. When the Sindians retired, Poonjah Sett was made minister; but soon after the Rao presented him with his own hand with a bowl of poison, and ordered him to drink it in his presence, merely because he had recommended an adherence to the articles of the treaty. His son Deojee Sett accepted the office of minister about three years subsequent to this, and likewise met an untimely fate by poison.

On quitting Cutch, Gholam Shah left a garrison of 5000 men at Luckput Bunder, which was then a petty town. He also proceeded to build an embankment to prevent the waters of the Indus from falling into the sea through the eastern branch of that river, which passes close to Luckput; and by this unjustifiable act he converted a fertile plain, which yielded from rice cultivation a revenue of

eight lacs of cories annually to the Bhooj durbar, into a dreary salt marsh.

When Gholam Shah died, his son Surufraz Khan recalled his troops from Luckput, but, as before stated, he twice after this entered Cutch with a considerable force, and devastated a great part of the country before he quitted it.

The garrisons on the part of Cutch in Ballumba, and other places, on the northern coast of Kattiwar, were expelled by the dependants of the Jam about this time; and, instead of resenting these injuries, or at least attempting it, the Rao gave up his whole time and thoughts to the most unheard of cruelty and sensuality. He kept a body of negroes about his person, who allowed no one but the partakers of his disgusting and depraved orgies to approach him. At length the ladies of the durbar prevailed on some of the principal officers to confine the Rao; and whilst he was under this temporary restraint, the whole of the negroes were either put to death, or fled to the adjacent countries. The Rao was so much irritated, that, on being released, he proceeded to Mandavie in disgust, and there occupied himself in building a fine palace, which, however, he never completely finished.

After stating these facts, it is almost superfluous to say, that Rao Gore was a cruel and blood-thirsty tyrant. Exclusively of the revolting instances already detailed, he killed with his own hand his brother Mansingjee, simply because he discovered

that he had obtained the favours of a female who had declined his visits; and it is estimated that in the course of his reign, a period of nineteen years, he sacrified more than thirty ministers to his rage or rapacity. He left two sons, the prince Rahiden, and Pruthiraj, commonly called Bhyjee Bawa, the former of whom succeeded him.

Rao Rahiden began to reign in 1778, at the early age of fourteen. His mother had appointed a Lohana, by name Dewichund, minister; and it was supposed, from the intercourse they afterwards carried on, that her connexion with him had been criminal, even during Rao Gore's lifetime.

Rao Rahiden had been accustomed from his infancy to hear of and see scenes of bloodshed and vice; and he quickly afforded proof that he was a most apt scholar in such matters, and needed not the dying exhortations of his father to revenge his mother's infidelity on the tribe (Lohana), to which her paramour belonged. He very soon replaced the negroes who had been turned out or destroyed some years before; and with their assistance he put to death in one day the minister Dewichund, together with his three brothers, and above two hundred of their followers.

A Banian minister was next set up under the auspices of a negro jemidar, named Mecraj; but these ill-assorted authorities soon quarrelled. Parties arranged themselves on each side; and whilst the Rao was indulged in the inner apartments with a few

companions in deeds of abandoned lust and profligacy, the palace was daily deluged with the blood of those who were contending for his favour. Some of the most desperate of the negroes were banished, and others put out of the way by poison, which, it is even asserted, the Rao himself mixed with their food, to rid himself of their continual importunities; but those who remained of this class had influence enough to obtain the Rao's order to destroy the Banian, which was done without delay in the public durbar.

On hearing of these nefarious proceedings, many of the district officers affected to consider themselves freed from all allegiance to Bhooj. Mandavie, however, and some other important places, continued obedient to the Rao; who, having recently adopted the Mussulman religion, resolved to force his subjects to follow his example, which he determined to do by destroying all the Hindoo temples and images. This mad project he first tried at Mandavie, whither he had gone for the express purpose; but the Brahmins and Banians, who form a large portion of the population, opposed him, and threatened, according to their mode of enforcing their wishes, to commit "traga" on themselves. The Rao, to let them clearly comprehend how careless he was of such denunciations, drew his sword and wounded five or six of them, before his attendants could seize his hand. He then gave directions that the town should be pillaged; an outrage which was

happily prevented by the rich merchants bribing the garrison to oppose the miscreants who had gladly hastened to carry the Rao's orders into execution. In the meantime, the Rao was himself in great danger from the exasperated feelings of the inhabitants, who attacked him and his escort, and obliged them to make a rapid retreat to Bhooj; where, as a compensation for the disappointment he had met with, and the opposition offered to him at Mandavie, he adopted the plan of moving about the streets habited as a fukeer, and accompanied by a body of his negroes, who put every man whom they met to death, unless he was able and willing to repeat the Mahommedan creed.

It now became notorious that the Rao was deranged; and after two or three attempts to place him under restraint, in which measure his brother Bhyjee Bawa and the ladies of the palace concurred, he was seized by a body of troops which had been secretly called in from Anjar. In one of the various unsuccessful attempts made to secure his person, which he constantly baffled through the vigilance and ferocity of his negroes, the then minister Kotaree Waga, and above three hundred people, were destroyed in cold blood in one of the palace yards, by the Rao and his desperate associates.

From this time the Rao was lodged in confinement;* but his brother Bhyjee Bawa being too

* The honourable M. ELPHINSTONE's *Minute*.

young to assume the direction of affairs, the government was conducted by twelve commanders of mercenary troops, who appear to have been all Mahommedans, and who were guided by the authority of Dhosul Vain, the principal member of their own body.

Among these leaders was Futteh Mahommed, a native of Sinde. This person appears to have been endowed with capacity and courage. Finding the government of Dhosul Vain at once weak and odious, he successfully intrigued with the troops, with the ministers by whom the civil business of the government was still conducted, and with some of the Jharejahs; until, in the year 1792, he was enabled to expel Dhosul Vain and his colleagues, and to transfer the reins of government into his own hands. He conducted the affairs of Cutch with firmness and ability for ten years, until Bhyjee Bawa, as regent, in whose name Futteh Mahommed appears to have administered the government, became of age, and began to feel the hardship of his exclusion from the regency. Hunsraj and the other ministers who were dissatisfied with the predominance of Futteh Mahommed, availed themselves of this feeling; and, seizing the opportunity of a casual absence of Futteh Mahommed from the capital, they carried off Bhyjee to Mandavie, of which Hunsraj was at that time in charge. The wealth and respectable character of Hunsraj, the junction of the other ministers, and the popular

manners of Bhyjee, joined to the goodness of his cause, soon drew the majority to his party; while Futteh Mahommed was glad to abandon Bhooj, and to compromise his claim to the administration for the possession of the fort and dependencies of Anjar.

The death of Bhyjee, which happened in 1802, six months after the revolution, restored the ascendancy of Futteh Mahommed. Hunsraj was a merchant, and his wealth and popularity were insufficient to make up for the want of knowledge and confidence in military affairs. He withdrew to Mandavie, leaving Bhooj to be captured by Futteh Mahommed, while Luckput Bunder, Moondra, Bitta, and Seesagud, with their districts, remained in the hands of independent chiefs,* who, although three of them professed Mahommedanism, were all close confederates of Hunsraj. These parties were supported entirely by their mercenary troops, consisting of Arabs, Sindees, and Mussulmans of Cutch. The Jharejahs appear to have possessed but little weight, and to have taken little interest in the struggle; some remained at their forts entirely neutral, others served the contending parties for pay; and although the Rao's person was in the hands of Futteh Mahommed, and Hunsraj had not even the shadow of legitimate authority, the greater part of the Bhyaud were entertained in his ser-

* Mahommed Meyan Sotah, who enacted so prominent a part afterwards, was one of these.

vice, or attached to his party. Futteh Mahommed proceeded with vigour against such of these as came within his reach; he fomented their family quarrels; he besieged their forts; he levied contributions on various pretences, as well to fill his treasury as to gratify his revenge. His necessities obliged him also to impose numerous and severe taxes and fines on the merchants and ryots; but although these proceedings naturally created general discontent, there seems to have been no attempt to form any combination against him. He continued to govern the capital and the greater part of the Rao's territories, and to carry on depredations on the possessions of his rivals until his death; and the name of the "Jemidar" is now as much respected in Cutch as that of any of the Raos, his predecessors in authority. The death of Futteh Mahommed took place in 1813;—it was preceded by that of Hunsraj, and shortly followed by that of Rao Rahiden.

As long as Futteh Mahommed's plans were attended with perfect success, he seems to have been as just and merciful as his situation and motives would allow him to be;* but the slightest check or misfortune excited his wrath; and the annals of those days merely exhibit a tissue of civil wars, of assassinations, of public murders, of treachery, and of the grossest tyranny. Indeed, it

* Col. POTTINGER's *Character of Futteh Mahommed.*

was impossible, with the materials Futteh Mahommed had to work upon, and the objects he had in view, that it could be otherwise; and although we may admire his courage, his liberality, the total want of any sordid feeling, and the consequent poverty in which he died, yet we must abhor his cruelty, his revengeful feelings, his perfidy when it was necessary to his purpose, and the unsparing manner in which he subjected the unhappy people whom he professed to foster to the constantly renewed horrors of a civil war of the most cruel description, which he could only contrive to carry on, by inviting into the country and enlisting bodies of desperate mercenaries, whose pay always amounted to considerably more than the revenue he drew from the places subject to him. He was, in one word, the despotic and remorseless leader of a band of plunderers; and if he showed a different and better feeling by founding two or three towns, building Luckput fort, and establishing a port at Toonah, he did all these from his wish to rival, and perhaps eventually to ruin, the chiefs who held places independent of him in the neighbourhood of these improvements.

He commanded in person four unsuccessful expeditions against the fort of Luckput after it had turned against him, and he laid waste the defenceless towns and villages; butchering the inhabitants, who had been forced by his desertion of them, to submit to the chiefs opposed to him. They

in their turn retaliated on his partizans; and I have myself been assured by some of the Potails of villages lying between Bhooj and Mandavie, that they have been pillaged and driven from their homes three times in one month by the troops of the contending parties.

SECTION II.

FROM THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE BRITISH CONNEXION, TO THE CONCLUSION OF THE TREATY OF 1816.

We have now arrived at a stage in the history of Cutch when its connexion with the British government forms the chief part of the detail; and it is here necessary, before proceeding to relate the consequences of the death of Futteh Mahommed, to revert a little, in order to trace the various negociations which took place. At one of the periods, 1801-2, when Hunsraj, the governor of Mandavie, had gained a temporary ascendancy, he entreated the assistance of the Bombay government, in the name of Rao Rahiden, for the purpose of allaying the dissensions between himself and Futteh Mahommed, which destroyed the peace of the country; and, to obtain this mediation he offered to cede Cutch to the Honourable Company, provided the capital was reserved for the residence of the Rao,

and arrangements were made for the future support of his Highness. During the next two years, another proposal was received at Bombay to subsidize a body of British troops for the protection of Cutch, which was followed also by a third a short time after (1804), in which both Hunsraj and Futteh Mahommed concurred.

But it was not the policy nor wish of the British government to form any closer alliance with the state of Cutch than what would merely gain for its own subjects, and those of its allies, protection against the unruly dependents of the Rao: and, accordingly, the only agreements entered into with the chieftains above-named, in 1809, were a provision for the suppression of piracy, which had been carried on to a great extent from all the northern ports; and another for the security of Kattiwar and Guzerat, by a stipulation that no durbar troops should cross to the eastward of the Runn or Gulf of Cutch. In return for these engagements, the British government undertook to adjust the settlement of some pecuniary claims made by the Bhooj durbar on the Jam of Nuwanuggur, but declined to interfere further in the affairs of Cutch than merely to warn the government of Sinde against any attempt at the conquest of that country which the Ameers had shown a disposition to effect.

These arrangements, unfortunately, did not accomplish the object of the English government. The shores of Cutch continued to swarm with pi-

rates, who committed their depredations in the most audacious manner, and to the interruption of all commerce. Sewiraj, the son of Hunsraj, who had succeeded his father in the command of Mandavie, encouraged these outrages by conniving at the escape of the most daring offenders; and further added to the evil, by imposing a tax on all vessels, not even excepting those furnished with British passes, which entered the Gulf of Cutch. Several of the Company's cruizers were employed in checking these piracies; but they, nevertheless, increased to such an extent that the Bombay government at length resolved to send an agent to remonstrate with the Mandavie authorities, as well as to obtain payment of a sum of money due to the Honourable Company, and his Highness the Guicawar, by Sewiraj Hunsraj.

The person selected for this purpose was Captain James M'Murdo, a gentleman whose talents and accomplishments fully qualified him for the difficult task. A considerable marine force was placed at his disposal, and he was instructed to collect information respecting the haunts and strength of the pirates;—a duty which he accomplished often at great personal risk, and in a manner highly satisfactory. This officer had been but a few days at Mandavie when his penetration enabled him to discover that the pirates not only received protection at that place, but were even permitted to remain unpunished under the imme-

diate eye of Futteh Mahommed. A ship freighted with property to a considerable amount, belonging to Shah Darab, a prince of Cabûl, was plundered in the Gulf of Cutch, by a miscreant named Nackwa Hussun, who carried his ill-gotten wealth to Bhooj, where he was allowed to squander it openly in every kind of dissipation.

With Sewiraj Hunsraj, who satisfied all demands, Captain M'Murdo was able to come to an amicable agreement; but matters had scarcely been settled at Mandavie, when his attention was strongly attracted to Futteh Mahommed, who had now also begun to show his disregard of the stipulation of 1809. Bodies of banditti from the province of Wagur were daily permitted to cross into Kattiwar, which they ravaged and laid waste. A Sindee assassin of a British officer, (Captain Phelan,) who had escaped from Nuwanuggur, was employed in the Bhooj durbar; the notorious pirate, Nackwa Hussun, with many others of the same description, were publicly encouraged to reside in that capital; and, as if all these violations of a sacred compact were insufficient, Futteh Mahommed himself proceeded to lead a force across the Runn into Parkur, and established a garrison at Santilpoor, with the avowed purpose of extending his authority in that quarter.

These various infringements of the treaty were not allowed to pass without a spirited remonstrance upon the part of Captain M'Murdo, who,

having concluded his arrangements at Mandavie, had retired to Moorvee in Kattiwar, whence he reminded the Jemidar of his engagements, and urged him to maintain them. He called on him to make restitution of the property of Shah Darab, who had solicited the intercession of the Bombay government, and insisted on the immediate surrender of the Sindee murderer and the pirate, as the only means of removing a most degrading suspicion from Futteh Mahommed himself. Through this representation the garrison at Santilpore was withdrawn, and negociations were in progress for the punishment of the Wagur plunderers, &c. when Futteh Mahommed died. Having thus supplied the broken link, we now proceed to follow the regular chain of the narration.

On the death of Futteh Mahommed, the government of Cutch devolved quietly on his two eldest sons, Hussain and Ibrahim Meyans. Nothing could be more dissimilar than the characters of these young men. Ibrahim Meyan possessed talent, courage, and energy, with the two last of these qualities in excess; although the younger of the two, he had already taken an active part in the affairs of the state; and he had been entrusted with the command of the important fortress of Kunkote in Wagur, while his brother, who was understood to be of a weak, slow, and vacillating disposition, had been retained at Bhooj under his father's own eye and direction. For some years

before his death, Futteh Mahommed had been chiefly guided by the counsels of Jugjeewan Mehtah, a Nagur Brahmin, of fair reputation, in whose integrity he himself reposed implicit confidence, and to whose advice it was his earnest and dying request that his sons would pay respect and obedience. The influence, however, of this individual had given great dissatisfaction to many of those who were connected by the ties of blood with the Jemidar, and had not only been the cause of much jealousy to his sons, but had proved particularly irksome to their mother, Jumalbhye, a woman of an intriguing disposition, much under the guidance of Mahommed Meyan Sotah, the soi-disant lord of Moondra, one of the most turbulent characters of the period, to whom she was nearly related. The angry feelings of these members of his family on this account had required all Futteh Mahommed's decision to restrain them, and they now broke forth with redoubled violence on his death. On hearing of that event, Ibrahim Meyan instantly returned from Kunkote, and, under the pretence of assembling his friends to assist at the ceremonies of his father's funeral, he invited Mahommed Meyan Sotah, Malik Mahommed, Dossul Vain, and other Mahommed officers, to Bhooj, where a party was immediately formed against Jugjeewan Mehtah, and a plan entered into for putting him to death.

Hussain Meyan, Futteh Mahommed's eldest

son, does not appear to have been entrusted to the full extent with the designs of these conspirators; either from an idea that he was partial to the intended victim, or that his timid and irresolute character rendered him unfit, in their estimation, for any measure which required secrecy and decision. The plot itself was discovered by the vigilance of an Arab Jemidar, named Ahya; who had obtained employment in the service of the durbar, through the patronage of Jugjeewan, and who, on hearing of his danger, came boldly forward, together with his countrymen, and declared their united intention of defending the Mehtah's life and property against all attack.

Matters had reached this crisis, when Rao Rahiden died; and an event occurred, which, from its adding religion to the other causes of dissention, was calculated to inflame the rage of the parties to the uttermost. That unhappy prince, who had long been confined on account of insanity, among his other wild eccentricities, had always affected a fiery zeal for the Mahommedan faith, and had even attempted, when not under personal restraint, to spread it by the sword throughout his dominions. Latterly, his ravings had been entirely on the subject of religion; he had adopted all the austerities of the most devoted enthusiast, and had left directions that his body should be interred in a small mosque, which he had erected for this particular purpose within the pre-

cincts of the palace. A request of this nature was too much in accordance with the religious prejudices of Ibrahim Meyan and his Mussulman associates to be received with indifference. They lost not a moment in preparing to give effect to it in the most open and solemn manner; and they had made every arrangement for the funeral, according to the forms prescribed by their creed, when Jugjeewan Mehtah, accompanied by four or five hundred Rajpoots, forcibly seized the corpse and burned it with great display and ceremony, agreeably to the customs of the Hindoos.

This proceeding had been adopted chiefly at the instigation of the ladies of the palace, who viewed the proposed interment in the light of a profanation. Ibrahim Meyan and his party were either too much taken by surprise, or had really not power sufficient to prevent its completion, and the ashes of Rao Rahiden were deposited with those of his ancestors; but it is almost needless to add, that Jugjeewan Mehtah's conduct was esteemed by the Mahommedans as an act of atrocious sacrilege; and while it thus exasperated his enemies to the utmost, and unfortunately excited against him the general feelings of a powerful and military class of the community, it had also the more fatal effect, as will afterwards appear, of diminishing his popularity with the Arabs, his recent defenders. In this state of affairs, intrigues immediately commenced regarding the succession to the throne,

and were carried on with all virulence of party spirit for several weeks. Jugjeewan Mehtah and the principal Jharejah chiefs declared in favour of Ladoba, the lawful son of Bhyjee Bawa, and nephew of the late Rao Rahiden; while the opposite faction resolved to elevate Maun Sing, the son of that prince by a slave girl.

Both these competitors were young, and ignorant of state affairs. Either of the two would have answered the general purposes of the Mahommedan party, who merely wished to place a puppet on the throne, that they might advance their own lawless designs, under the cover of his name and authority; and Ladoba, from being the younger and more legitimate, would in all probability have been preferred, had not the private feelings of Ibrahim Meyan interfered, and fixed the election on his rival. To explain this circumstance, we must enter briefly into the history of Ibrahim Meyan. About two years before the period at which we have arrived, that young man had formed an attachment for Kesser Bye, the sister of Maun Sing, who, either from affection or ambitious motives, returned his regard, while her brother encouraged his stolen visits at the palace. The intercourse between the lovers was exposed, by a Marwarry Jemidar, named Malum Sing, to Futteh Mahommed, whose conduct on this occasion evinced the superiority of his character. A connexion with the family of the Rao, now easily within his

reach, would have added much to his personal respectability, and might have been a sure means of continuing his power to his descendants ; but he disdained to purchase such an advantage at the expence of his duty and his reputation, and not only peremptorily forbade his son's further visits at the durbar, but forced him to leave the capital and remain in Wagur. On his return to Bhooj after his father's death, Ibrahim Meyan renewed his intimacy with Kesser Bye, at whose entreaties he engaged to support her brother's pretensions, to the exclusion of the lawful heir. Mahommed Meyan Sotah received a bribe of 50,000 cories ; and, by their united influence, Maun Sing was raised to the throne by the name of Rao Bharra, or Bharmuljee.

No opposition appears to have been made to this election by the Jharejahs, many of whom remained in their own possessions indifferent to the passing events, while the others were either bribed to compliance, or afraid to object. Rao Bharmuljee was eighteen years of age when he ascended the throne. His previous life had been passed in the gloomy monotony of the palace, and his elevation made but little change in his situation. Except on occasions when he was required to appear in public as a pageant, he and his cousin Ladoba were alike kept in strict confinement, where they are said to have lived together in terms of the closest intimacy, and even to have engaged in plans for the subversion

of the influence of the Moondra chieftain, who, in the name of Hussain Meyan, soon possessed himself of all the authority, and contrived to fill Bhooj with his mercenary troops. All that two young princes so situated were able to attempt, was not likely to be effectual; but the haughty and overbearing conduct of Mahommed Meyan Sotah at length had the effect of rousing the slumbering energies of Hussain Meyan himself, who, disgusted at the little consideration which had been shown him, privately abandoned the Mussulman party, and made overtures to that headed by Jugjeewan Mehtah.

Meanwhile the British government had, subsequently to the death of Futteh Mahommed, renewed its application to Hussain Meyan, who, after some negociations, requested an agent should be sent to Bhooj. The person selected for this employment was Ragoba Appa, a man of competent talent and experience, with whom I have often conversed, and who was directed to adopt the most conciliatory demeanour in his intercourse with the Cutch government. On his arrival at Bhooj, he found the parties in the state just detailed, and by his interposition confirmed the renewed friendship between the Mehtah and Hussain Meyan, both of whom he found favourable to the object of his mission. The consequence of Ragoba Appa's proceedings was a request to Captain M'Murdo, who was still at Moorvee, to visit Bhooj, and a remon-

strance to Hussain Meyan on the part of Jugjeewan Mehtah, who, as yet supported by the Arabs, and now inspired with confidence by the presence of the British agent, declared his determination not to serve the durbar in any capacity till Mahommed Meyan Sotah was dismissed. Hussain Meyan summoned up resolution to comply with the Mehtah's request; but Mahommed Meyan Sotah showed no readiness to quit Bhooj, and even attempted, by threats and entreaties, to obtain an order forbidding the approach of Captain M'Murdo. Finding, however, his efforts unsuccessful, he retired to Moondra, in the greatest indignation and disgust. Ibrahim Meyan, though equally hostile to the measures which had been adopted by his brother and Jugjeewan Mehtah, continued to linger at the capital, watching the issue of events, and sunk in a vortex of profligacy and intrigue.

Captain M'Murdo was received by the authorities at Bhooj with respect, and found Jugjeewan Mehtah and Hussain Meyan apparently inclined to be on the most amicable terms with the British government. On the subject of Santilpore, which became a matter of discussion, they excused themselves, by declaring that they considered the Cutch durbar had a right to send troops to that place; the spirit of the treaty of 1809 being, as they understood it, to prevent incursions into the territories of the Honourable Company and its allies, among whom they did not include the Nawaub of

Rahidenpoore, to whom Santilpore belonged. They acknowledged that Futteh Mahommed had invited the infamous Nackwa Hussun to Bhooj after his plundering Prince Darab's property, but denied the value of the effects seized; there being, as they asserted, nothing more than a few Persian ornaments, which they professed their willingness to restore. The pirate himself, they admitted, was in the service of Mahommed Meyan Sotah, from whom they agreed to demand him, and to deliver him up to the British government for punishment. They were further ready to give up the Sinde assassin, provided he could be discovered in Cutch; and they also confessed the justice of our demands against Wagur, to chastise the plunderers of which province they offered to send a force, and invited Captain M'Murdo to accompany it. Hussain Meyan freely acknowledged the imbecility of his administration, and expressed his readiness to accept the mediation of the British government, whose good offices, he said, he had before intended to solicit in assisting to settle the disturbed state of Cutch, and to enable him to place the resources of the country in the hands of legitimate authority.

In conformity with these proposals, which, though evasive in many respects, showed some proof of a desire to obtain the favour of the English government, the durbar applied to the Moondra chief for the surrender of the pirate Hussun, and Hussain Meyan marched, 12th April, with

3000 men into Wagur, whither he was accompanied by Captain M'Murdo. Mahommed Meyan Sotah's laconic and cavalier reply to the application just alluded to, will demonstrate the temper of that chief, as well as his regard for truth—the pirate having been actually seen in his employment at the very time his letter was written—and his respect for the government of Cutch. It was in these terms: "You mention the English M'Murdo is arrived, let me know what he communicates. The Nackwa Hussun is at Curachee." * On the advance of the above force into Wagur, many of the chieftains repaired to Hussain Meyan's camp, and submitted to his authority. He established garrisons at Palanswa Rapoor, &c. and the province ostensibly returned to a state of order; but, as his means were too limited to secure an effectual and permanent tranquillity, he shortly after returned to Bhooj, and Captain M'Murdo proceeded to Kattiwar, perfectly satisfied of the inability of the reigning powers in Cutch to restrain their troublesome dependents.

During this interval, Ibrahim Meyan, although he had accompanied the Wagur expedition, had continued a member of the Moondra party, and had never ceased to upbraid and condemn his brother for his adherence to what he termed the British interests. On the return of the latter to the capital, Ibrahim established himself at Kun-

* A port in Sinde.

kote, and encouraged the Belah and other plunderers of Wagur by every means in his power; finally, he declared open war against his brother and the Bhooj authorities, and, together with Ascaran Sa, a troublesome and turbulent character, with whom he had allied himself and Mahommed Meyan Sotah, committed extensive depredations in the district of Anjar, and forcibly took possession of the durbar, town, and fort of Futteh Ghud. While the eastern side of Cutch was thus a prey to rapine and disorder, Mandavie was also the scene of contention and bloodshed. Dhosul Vain and Malik Mahommed, at the instigation of the Moondra chieftain, made an attempt to wrest it from Sewiraj Hunsraj, their employer, but were detected and defeated. Civil war raged with all its fury; nor had the durbar any means to check or suspend its horrors. Three or four distinct factions divided the country, all of whom joined only in one object, the plunder of the labouring and peaceable classes, who were reduced to beggary and starvation by their manifold extortions. The Wagur banditti, seizing the opportunity, extended their ravages both at home and abroad. Sixty villages belonging to the Guicowar and Peishwa in Kattiwar, had now been destroyed; and as no effectual means were taken to prevent these outrages, the British government at length intimated that their troops, and those of their allies, would no longer be restrained from following the ma-

rauders to their own haunts in Wagur; that the Bhooj durbar would be liable to the charges of the equipment of the force to be so employed; and that certain instalments due to his Highness the Rao by the Jam of Nuwanuggur, would be applied to the indemnification of the losses already sustained. This intimation on the part of the English government, added to the successes of the Moondra party, which Hussain Meyan had no power to combat, produced a powerful effect on the weak and timid character of that chief. After some vacillation, he at length determined to throw himself on the mercy of his brother, to whom, through the influence of their mother, he was reconciled; and Cutch became once more at the disposal of men inimical to any thing like British influence; as proofs of which, the promise formerly made, that the pirate Hussun, who was now a prisoner at Bhooj, should be delivered up, was disregarded —the Sinde murderer was openly retained in the service of Ibrahim Meyan—and he and his party adopted every means in their power to show their indifference respecting the claims which had been preferred.

The reunion of the brothers was a prelude to a cruel and barbarous tragedy. Jugjeewan Mehtah's habits of business rendered him at first necessary to them as a minister; but his offences against the party now in power had been too grievous to be forgiven; and the former resolution

of assassinating him was soon renewed. His popularity with the Arabs had been for some time gradually on the decline. Most of them, in fact, had incurred large private debts to him, besides receiving considerable advances of pay from him as a public servant of the durbar, and they now viewed him only in the light of a creditor from whose importunities they were anxious to be relieved. Under these circumstances, a confidential agent from Ibrahim Meyan, found no great difficulty in corrupting the popular Jemidar Ahya; and the whole Arab body finally consented to withdraw their protection from Jugjeewan, in consideration of an acquittance of all sums of money which had been advanced to them from the public treasury, and a present of 6000 cories to each of their leading officers. These proceedings were carried on with the most profound secrecy; and it is but charity to suppose that Hussain Meyan was not made acquainted with them until too late to prevent their fatal effects. The ill-fated object of the conspiracy himself did not entertain the slightest suspicion of his danger, till the designs of his enemies were ripe for execution, and he saw his residence suddenly surrounded and attacked by a body of armed men under the command of Ibrahim Meyan in person, and Jaffeer Sotah, the brother of the Moondra chief. The presence of two such leaders, whom Jugjeewan had always known to be the most inveterate of his foes, could leave not a mo-

ment's doubt on his mind as to the intentions of the assailants. In despair, therefore, he prepared to make the most determined resistance, and, supported by his domestics, actually continued to baffle all attempts to effect an entrance into his house for six hours. At the end of that period, three pieces of ordnance having been brought to bear on the door, further defence was hopeless; and he was inveigled into a capitulation by a promise sacredly given, that he might proceed without molestation to the palace of Futteh Mahommed's sons to plead for his life. The assault had been so protracted, that Ibrahim Meyan himself had retired before this understanding was entered into; but a negro Jemidar of some importance in his service, named Ibrahim Seedee, who was present, and in whose honour Jugjeewan believed he could repose confidence, having volunteered to become security for the maintenance of the pledge, and even to escort him in safety to the presence of Hussain Meyan, the unfortunate Mehtah went out into the street without hesitation, and accepted his protection. He was then conducted amidst great tumult and confusion, to the gate of Hussain Meyan's residence, where he was appealing to the populace, and imploring his persecutors to spare his life, when Ibrahim Meyan appeared at a window, and, scornfully taunting him with having tried to sell his country to the British, exultingly ordered him to be dispatched; a command

which was instantly executed by Jaffeer Sotah and his attendants.

Early in the morning of the same day, Ramchunder Mehtah, the brother of Jugjeewan, on going to pay his usual respects at the durbar, had been entrapped and strangled by order of Ibrahim Meyan, who alleged that he had committed suicide. Another brother, the sole remaining member of the family, named Kooberjee, who had long been in declining health, and who was probably spared by the assassins on account of his utter helplessness and insignificance, having witnessed the ruin of his house, determined not to survive it, and a few days after, caused himself to be buried alive, agreeably to a custom sometimes adopted by Brahmins, of invoking the vengeance of the Almighty upon those who have oppressed them. The bloody work of the conspirators being completed, the Mehtah's house was given over to the pillage of the soldiery, and the most valuable part of his property was confiscated to the state, or rather to the private use of Hussain and Ibrahim Meyans, who took the administration of affairs into their own hands, assisted by Mehtahs Wullubjee and Luckmadass. Jugjeewan Mehtah had been much respected at Bhooj, and his murder, under such cruel and afflicting circumstances, excited great disgust among the inhabitants. Hussain Meyan had taken no active or open part in it; and the odium appears chiefly to have fallen on Mahommed Meyan

Sotah, and his brother Jaffeer, who retired to Moondra, in order to escape the popular indignation, as well as from a fear that the British government would interfere.

The ferment occasioned by these tragical events had scarcely subsided when Ibrahim Meyan was as suddenly called to the tribunal of Heaven to answer for his offences. He had, in concert with his brother Luckmadass, and other associates, appointed a public day, in order to bestow rewards and distinctions on his officers, and particularly on those who had assisted him in the murder of Jugjeewan Mehtah; and the whole assembled in great state at Hussain Meyan's residence for the purpose. Amongst others who presented themselves, in the hope of obtaining notice, was Malum Sing, the Marwarry Jemidar, formerly mentioned as having betrayed Ibrahim Meyan's intrigue with Kesser Bye to Futteh Mahommed, and who now urged a claim of many years' service to the durbar for preferment. Ibrahim Meyan, whose feelings towards the man may be readily conceived, repulsed him with scorn, and the grossest abuse; which the Marwarry immediately resented, by stabbing him mortally on the spot. The scene that followed may be imagined. Hussain Meyan horror-struck, and expecting to be the next victim, rushed with Luckmadass into another apartment; but their apprehension was soon proved to be groundless, for the assassin was instantly cut in pieces, and

it was never discovered that he had any confederates.

It is generally understood that Malum Sing went to the levee expressly for the purpose of committing the murder; and this opinion is supported by the fact of his having carried the weapon with which he perpetrated it carefully concealed under his clothes into the assembly. He had just before been relieved from duty at the palace, and he was supposed by many to have been instigated by the Rao; but Bharmuljee, who was then only about eighteen years of age, had previously shown no evil disposition; nor does there seem any good reason for adding this additional sin to his load of crimes. Persons who were well acquainted with the characters of the parties, and who were eye-witnesses of the transaction, do not attribute it to the provocation that was given at the moment; and Ibrahim Meyan's death may probably be referred to his having engaged in an intrigue with a female connected with the Marwarry Jemidar, whose revenge was no doubt sharpened by the insults that were offered to him. Ibrahim Meyan had not attained the age of twenty-five years when he was assassinated. From his depraved habits, and total want of principle, it is scarcely to be supposed that his death would be regretted; but as he was a young man of great liberality, personal bravery, and address, and the only one of his family who inherited any portion of the talent of his father,

the old friends of Futteh Mahommed bewailed his loss, as that of the representative, however unworthy, of their Jemidar, and foresaw the immediate ruin of his house, whose power he himself, from a knowledge of the characters of his children, had prophesied would not long survive him.

The murder of his brother excited the greatest consternation in Hussain Meyan's mind. Unable to distinguish between friends and enemies, he resigned himself almost to despair, and, with the timidity natural to his disposition, remained shut up in his house, guarded by the Arabs. His suspicions at first fell upon the Rao, whose palace he ordered to be attacked; and although his Highness solemnly protested his innocence, a body of Arabs were permanently stationed in the durbar; while, in order to guard against future conspiracies, the Marwarry soldiery in Bhooj, amounting to two or three hundred men, were either massacred, or expelled from Cutch. All these events created a great sensation throughout the country. The gates of the capital were kept closed for many days, and scarcely any communication took place among the inhabitants. Hussain Meyan's fears rendered him perfectly incapable of acting with calmness or propriety; and the government being without any efficient head, the Arab Jemidars usurped the whole authority, and for a short time conducted the affairs of the state, levying for their own use heavy fines and contributions. But-

chow, Chowbaree, and Rhapoor, with several other towns, taking advantage of the imbecility of the government, declared their independence of Bhooj, and even applied for the support and protection of the British. After a time Hussain Meyan, who had never dared to appear in public since the assassination of his brother, sent to implore the assistance of Mahommed Meyan Sotah; who, well aware, however, of his unpopularity, declined visiting Bhooj on the plea of sickness, but added to the troubles of the country, by directing his retainers to plunder in every direction. During this state of affairs, the Wagur freebooters continued their depredations, and the British government again reminded Hussain Meyan of their claims. His personal apprehensions, and the weakness of his administration, made him now readily grasp at any chance of support; and he willingly offered to send an agent to adjust all differences.

But the incapacity of Hussain Meyan for government, and the despicable nature of his character, had of late become but too apparent. The troubles he had inflicted on the country were now so grievously felt, that the respectable part of the community determined to be relieved from a chief, at once odious and contemptible; and the tide of popular opinion turned entirely in favour of Rao Bharmuljee, who had secretly been carrying on negociations with Sewiraj Hunsraj and the

principal Jharejahs. Deputies soon arrived from Mandavie, expressing the readiness of the authorities there to acknowledge the Rao ; and Sewiraj himself, with Ascaran Sa and many of the chiefs, assembled troops in support of his cause. Hussain Meyan, whom his Arab Jemidars had in vain attempted to inspire with courage, readily yielded to the current ; and when it became evident that his cause was unsupported, he made a virtue of necessity, by entering into a compromise with Bharmuljee, who, on his consenting to leave Bhooj, gave him a grant of Anjar, Butchow, Badurghud, and Kunkote. He was then dismissed with an honorary dress, and proceeded to Anjar, whither he was accompanied by all the Arab mercenaries, none of whom the new government would on any account permit to remain at Bhooj. By these measures all opposition being terminated, the keys of the city were delivered, with every formality, to Rao Bharmuljee, who appointed Sewiraj Hunsraj and Ascaran Sa his ministers ; and the country, for the present, was restored to quietness.

The British government had awaited the issue of events at Bhooj, in the hope that a restoration of legitimate authority would lead to an adjustment of their demands. They now renewed their application to the Rao, and expressed their willingness to receive envoys from his Highness ; but the measures of this prince soon showed how averse he was to the establishment of a good un-

derstanding. The Cutch durbar had not hitherto been absolutely identified with the plunderers of Wagur; but Bharmuljee settled the question, by openly complimenting Sirmanya, the most notorious of these, with a dress of honour; and he also adopted the violent step of compelling the agent of Captain M'Murdo to quit Bhooj, under the evasive pretence that he would employ Soonderjee Seojee, a horse-contractor for the Honourable Company at Mandavie, as the mediator with the British government.

The tranquillity of Cutch was of short duration. The hereditary chieftain of Kunkote suddenly surprised that town, and expelled Hussain Meyan's garrison; Sewiraj Hunsraj and Ascaran Sa quarrelled before six weeks had elapsed, and the latter left Bhooj to join Mahommed Meyan Sotah, who had raised the standard of rebellion at Moondra, and was collecting troops from every quarter. The country was once more involved in faction and confusion. The Rao assembled a force and moved against Moondra, which he invested, at the same time compelling the authorities there to listen to terms. Mahommed Meyan Sotah engaged to surrender his town at the end of one month, provided his Highness would immediately withdraw his army, and, in proof of his sincerity, he delivered up his brother, Jaffeer Meyan, as a hostage; but before the stipulated period had elapsed, Jaffeer Meyan contrived to escape to Moondra, and assisted his

brother in retaining that place in defiance of the durbar.

The government of Rao Bharmuljee soon became exceedingly unpopular. His marriage, which took place on his return from Moondra, attracted crowds to Bhooj, who were treated by him and his public servants with great indignity. He evinced a strong and unaccountable aversion to the Jharejah chiefs, many of whom had been instrumental in restoring him to the throne; and an unwarrantable attack he made on the chief of Assumbia, whose town he destroyed, and on whose family he imposed a large fine, gave great disgust to the whole of these noblemen. Unpopular as the Rao was in his own dominions, his ministers determined to raise him enemies from abroad. A British and Guicowar force had been ordered to reduce Jooriah in Kattiwar, and Sewiraj Hunsraj openly supplied the rebellious authorities of that place with assistance and ammunition.

The easy and unexpected reduction of Jooriah embarrassed the Cutch government much, and opened the Rao's eyes to the danger of his proceedings. He consequently determined, if possible, to make his peace, even thus late, with the British, and to atone for his offences. With this view he announced his intention of punishing the Wagur banditti, and marched into that district with a formidable army. He reduced Planswa, Rhapoor, and Kanmeer, and likewise put to death the notorious

plunderer Sirmanya, whom he had before encouraged and rewarded; but it soon became evident that these measures had their origin in fear, not inclination, for he did not remain absent from Bhooj longer than fifteen days, and no effectual steps were taken to prevent the future incursions of the freebooters. It would almost appear that Sirmanya had been killed by chance, or contrary to the Rao's wishes, as he dismissed his family, equally atrocious as himself, with promises of protection.

Rao Bharmuljee's presence in Wagur suspended for a short time the operations of the banditti; but he had scarcely withdrawn his force, when their depredations were renewed with redoubled vigour. Captain M'Murdo's own camp was attacked, and much injury sustained by him personally, in the neighbourhood of Moorvee. In the space of a few months, one hundred and thirty-six villages in Kattiwar had been plundered, forty thousand head of cattle had been carried off, and property to the amount of eight lacs of rupees damaged and destroyed. In addition to all this, an expence had been incurred by the British and Guicowar governments of above ten lacs of rupees in equipping troops to check these unwarrantable proceedings. Forbearance had been misconstrued by the Bhooj durbar into inability; and, as it was now certain that the Rao either wanted the power or the inclination to control his unruly subjects, Captain M'Murdo was instructed to make a spe-

cific demand of compensation for the past, and a guarantee against future incursions, together with the surrender of Sirmanya's children, and satisfaction for the insults offered to the British government in having so long delayed, under frivolous pretences, to send an envoy to settle all disputes, as well as for the offensive manner in which the native agent had been forced to leave Bhooj. To these points an explicit answer was to be required within a given period; and in order clearly to evince the intentions of the allied governments, an army composed of British and Guicowar troops, under the command of Colonel East and Wittul Row Dewanjee, was ordered to advance at the same time to the border of the Runn.

Bharmuljee permitted the specified period to elapse without sending any answer to these demands, although, a few days after, he addressed a letter to Captain M'Murdo, couched in the most general terms, and without any allusion whatever to the articles in question. In consequence of this evasion, the combined troops crossed the Runn at Venasir, and advanced to Wandiah, the chief of which, and many others, immediately threw themselves on the mercy of the allied governments. Proposals had previously been made by the Mandavie and Moondra authorities, both of which had now thrown off their subjection to Bharmuljee, and with them Captain M'Murdo lost no time in entering into a communication, in order to prevent

a reunion with the durbar. He addressed a letter to the Rao, expressing an eager desire that matters might be amicably settled, and still begging agents to be sent for the purpose. To the principal Jharejahs he issued proclamations calculated to inspire them with confidence, and explanatory of the intention of the British government, which, he assured them, was resolved neither to interfere with their domestic concerns, nor to disturb their repose, so long as they remained quiet in their own domains, but merely, and amicably if possible, to obtain from the Cutch durbar satisfaction for the indignities which had been received, indemnification for past losses, and security against future depredation. The most prudent measures were taken to prevent any interference with the inhabitants and villages on the line of march; and, by the time the force reached Butchow, the people had recovered their confidence, and supplies were readily afforded.

Meanwhile Rao Bharmuljee had taken no effectual means, either by assembling a force, or by negociation, to prevent the advance of the British army. He had hoped that some assistance would be afforded him by the Ameers of Sinde; but the Bombay government had taken the precaution of previously explaining its intentions to their Highnesses, and had expostulated with them against any interference with the affairs of Cutch. As the crisis approached, he made an attempt to

enter into an alliance with Sewiraj Hunsraj, Mahommed Meyan Sotah, and some other chiefs who had combined against him, but without success. He also directed the Jharejahs to assemble at Bhooj, but a few only obeyed the summons, and these apparently with no warlike intentions.

Colonel East's force advanced to Bheemasir, within three marches of the capital and one of Anjar, without any show of opposition. The intention of Captain M'Murdo had been to proceed directly to Bhooj, and there to enter into such a treaty as would meet the wishes of his government; but this arrangement was entirely changed from the detection of one of the most treacherous and cowardly acts that ever was recorded. On the arrival of the army at Bheemasir, it was discovered that a large quantity of wheat, and it is said arsenic, had been thrown into the tank on which the troops chiefly depended for water; and information was at the same time received that all the wells in the direction of Bhooj were poisoned in a similar manner. Although suspicions at first attached to Rao Bharmuljee, it was soon ascertained that the perpetrators of this atrocity were horsemen from Anjar, and that the more immediate agent was Hussain Meyan. Under these circumstances, it became clear that the army ought not to proceed without due caution; and as such a disposition had been evinced, it was necessary, as a temporary measure, to take possession of some

post, that would secure a constant communication with the friendly shores of Kattiwar. Hussain Meyan was accordingly called on to permit the occupation of Anjar, and its tributary fort of Toonah, on the sea side, by a British garrison; but as he objected to this proposal, the force advanced, and a battery was erected against Anjar, which did not surrender until a breach had been rendered practicable. Hussain Meyan was allowed to remain unpunished, and has since lived in obscurity at Moorvee, chiefly on the charity of the Bhooj durbar.

On the reduction of Anjar, which was immediately followed by that of Toonah, Captain M'Murdo again addressed the Rao, explaining the cause and necessity of the measures which had been adopted, assuring him that the forts would only be held in trust till an accommodation should be concluded, and again urging him to send agents for the settlement of all disputes. On the day after the surrender of the towns, Mahommed Meyan Sotah made his submission in person at the British camp, and letters were received from the Rao, and Sewiraj Hunsraj, of a conciliatory nature.

Under the impression that Bharmuljee's occupation of the throne was considered an usurpation by the chiefs and inhabitants, as well, perhaps, as from some regard to the rights of legitimacy, Captain M'Murdo had been instructed to ascertain

the feelings of the Jharejahs towards Ladoba, and if these were favourable, to enter into a treaty with that prince as the lawful Rao of Cutch. No disposition unfavourable to Bharmuljee was, however, evinced in any quarter, and it consequently only remained to commence the necessary negociations with him.

It was only on the arrival of the British army at Lackoond, within a few miles of the capital, that agents arrived from Bhooj expressing the willingness of their master to agree to the proposed terms. The Rao then delivered a bond with the security of the principal Jharejahs for twenty lacs of rupees in payment of all demands, besides a promise of two lacs of cories as a yearly tribute; and after several negociations, a treaty of amity and alliance was concluded between the governments, of which the principal articles, independently of the compensation for past, and security against future, depredations, on the part of the durbar, were an engagement on our part to reduce Wagur, &c. to the subjection of the Rao, and the cession of the city and district of Anjar to the British government, in virtue of which, Captain M'Murdo remained at that place as collector and resident in Cutch.

SECTION III.

FROM THE CONCLUSION OF THE TREATY OF 1816, TO THE CONCLUSION OF THE TREATY OF 1819.

The terms of the new treaty were highly advantageous to the Rao Bharmuljee. His title to the throne, however dubious, was now acknowledged by the only power in India which could give it stability; Wagur was reduced under subjection by the British troops in the course of a few weeks; and a yearly assessment in his name, as lord paramount, was laid on its chiefs at the rate of forty cories for every plough. The refractory authorities of Mandavie, Moondra, Seesaghud, Butchao, &c. seeing the aspect of affairs, at once submitted; and Bharmuljee found his country for the first time free from open faction, and himself in undisputed sovereignty.

Of the twenty lacs of rupees claimed in name of indemnification and expenses, the British govern-

ment shortly afterwards remitted their own portion, amounting to above eight hundred thousand, together with the yearly tribute of two lacs of cories; a liberality which at first equally surprised and delighted the Rao, who found no great difficulty in raising the remaining balance by fines on his refractory chieftains, and demands, under the title of voluntary contributions, from those who had long enjoyed the revenues of the country. Mahommed Meyan Sotah was the only one of these who declared his inability to afford pecuniary assistance; but the Bhooj government eventually found means to obtain from him nearly six lacs of cories.

Tranquillity being thus restored in Cutch, the British troops, with the exception of a small garrison stationed at Anjar, evacuated the country; and the durbar was left free to adopt its own measures. Luckmadass Wullubjee, already spoken of as the confederate of Hussain Meyan, became minister, with the assistance of Nuthoo Mehtah; and the military advisers of the Rao were Jharejahs Noughunjee of Vinjan, and Pragjee of Kotree. None of these men were favourably inclined to the British interests, nor could much confidence be reposed in them in any point of view. Luckmadass, a proud and narrow-minded Brahmin, though a man of talent, had been accused as an accessary in the murder of Jugjeewan Mehtah, and Jharejah Pragjee was known to be faithless and treacherous. Luckily for Bharmuljee, however, he found

an able and sincere adviser in his sister Kesser Bhye, a young lady who is said to have possessed considerable ability, and who, for a time, was able to guide his conduct by the maxims of prudence and moderation.

The British interference in Cutch had given great offence, and occasioned much apprehension to the Ameers of Sinde, whose jealousy and fears were not allayed by the repeated explanations they had received from Bombay. They immediately despatched messengers to Bhooj, ostensibly to negociate the payment of a sum of money due at Hyderabad by a merchant of Luckput, but, in reality, to intrigue with the Rao; and represented the circumstance of our having sent a force into Cutch, in the most exaggerated light to their sovereign lord Mahmood Shah, the king of Cabûl, whom they entreated to remonstrate with the supreme government of India. Intelligence was soon after received at Bombay of preparations for the assemblage of a force at Shikarpoor; and various rumours were afloat of the march of the Afghaun army towards Sinde. But the Sindian ambassadors, on their arrival at Bhooj, soon divulged their real object. They represented to the durbar the danger of forming a connexion with neighbours so powerful as the British; and they even went so far as to insinuate that, in case of necessity, the army of the Ameers was at the disposal of Rao Bharmuljee. No means were left untried to break up the

alliance; but the Cutch government, fortunately for itself, and whatever may have been its real feelings, was proof against their solicitations; and the vakeels returned to Hyderabad without having gained any apparent object.

The mission from Sinde to the Bhooj durbar was soon followed by a remonstrance from the king of Cabûl himself to the governor-general of India; in which, after expressing his conviction, that the invasion of the Rao's territories was unsanctioned by his lordship, his Majesty proceeds to claim for himself an unknown and never-before-heard-of, sovereignty over Cutch, and to require the renunciation of all interference with that country as a component portion of the Afghaun dominions. A letter from the vizier Futteh Khan, which accompanied the king's communication, was still more explicit. It stated, that "news at this time has been brought to the royal feet, that some Feringees of the English tribe, having more boldness than discretion, have shown a disposition to create disturbance, and have extended the hand of encroachment to the country of Cutch, which is the frontier district of the royal dominions. On hearing of this, the mind of his majesty was disturbed with anger, and his royal mandate was issued, that letters should be despatched to all the Nazims of the provinces of the kingdom, enjoining them to be prepared, and to expect the receipt of further orders." The vizier proceeds to say, that, "if the

people in question should not be restrained, and if intelligence of a similar occurrence should again reach the king, that two lacs of Dooranies and Elats, four dustahs of Emacks and Tymoorias, Huzarahs as numerous as ants and grasshoppers, the tribes of Ghilges, and Andarees, and Tonkas, and Makoos, and Khookhanies, and Kohistanies; the armies composed of the Khusselbashees, and Moghuls, and Kanwaries, and Toorkalans, and Shurnwaries Husmud Khatick, and the Bungoes great and small, and the Daoodyes, and the Rohaus, and the Mahmoodzyes, and the Yoozafzyes both of the hills and of the plains, and the men of Nagaon and Aman, and the Nuwab Suboobund Khan, ruler of Kutch Walliah, and the governor of the Derahs, and of Mooltan, and the army of Beloches, Burohooe, and Muzara, and Rokunsood Dowlah, and Ameersood Dowlah, with the Beloche army, and a train of artillery, and a Shaha Khaneh,—all these forces, numerous as the waves of the sea, having collected agreeably to the royal orders, will surround these people, and annihilate them, and friendship will be at an end. It is best, therefore, that you should prohibit them, and restrain them from these improper proceedings."

This high-sounding epistle, together with the formidable muster-roll of his Majesty's forces, was not likely to excite much alarm in the mind of the Marquis of Hastings, who considered it, or, at all events, determined to treat the whole as for-

gery. His lordship addressed a friendly reply to the vizier, in which he declared his conviction that the communications from Cabûl were "the fabrication of persons ill-disposed to both states, who sought to embroil them with a view to obtain some benefit to themselves;" reminded him that Cutch had "never at any time formed part of the dominions of the Afghaun monarchy;" and shortly explained the object of the British interference; adding, at the same time, that he necessarily believed the letter fictitious, since he was too well apprized of the "knowledge, experience, and sagacity of Futteh Khan," to imagine that he could conceive the British government would for a moment be influenced by any display of force, "and that his information was too enlarged not to know, that though it does not misuse its strength by wantonly trespassing on its neighbours, it has never been attacked without destroying those who unjustly assailed it."

The state of affairs in Cabûl was, however, somewhat changed before his lordship's reply reached that kingdom, and the messenger who conveyed it, after having been detained several weeks as a prisoner, by a detachment of Runjeet Sing's army, overtook the vizier of Peshavur ready to take the field against the Sikhs, who were threatening the frontier at Attock. Futteh Khan, with that adroitness which native diplomatists generally display, immediately resolved to turn the letter to account,

and with the view of impressing his enemies with sentiments favourable to his own interests, ordered a salute to be fired on its reception; at the same time proclaiming aloud through his camp that despatches had been received from the friend of the Cabûl government, the governor-general of India.

To the Marquis of Hastings the vizier replied in the most hyperbolical terms of oriental metaphor; assuring Captain M'Murdo, who had been the medium of communication, that "the sweet and delicious perfume of his lordship's rose-scented letter had ascended, with the most exquisite sensations, to the innermost recesses of his brain;" and that, from the moment he had perused it, he felt the excess of his regard for the British government, between which, and the state of Cabûl, he trusted that the "carpet of friendship would ever be spread in the palace of affection." He desired the courier to inform his employer, that, in the prosecution of his operations against the Sikhs, he not only did not expect an enemy in the English, but looked for their support; that in due time he meant to bring Sinde to its former state of dependence on Cabûl; and that, if they had really any views towards that country, he would readily enter into them, and afford his assistance. To complete the farce, he gravely professed ignorance of the letters which had been received at Calcutta, and declared, that he could only account for them by supposing, that a Sindian agent had procured

by bribery, impressions of his own and other official seals, from a faithless secretary who had been left at the capital of Cabûl.

The Cutch government had, in the meantime, betrayed its utter unworthiness of the confidence and liberality of the British. Strange as it may seem, even the releasing it from a bond of so many lacs of rupees, excited the suspicion of its members; and the effects of the Sindian intrigues were soon visible. The increased power of the Rao only served to swell his arrogance and pride. During an occasional absence of the resident, the durbar determined to seize on Toona Bunder; and for this purpose, the Arab mercenaries were recruited at Bhooj, in express opposition to the articles of the late treaty. But these treacherous designs were crushed in their birth by the vigilance and decision of Captain M'Murdo, who called in the assistance of some troops from Okamundel, on the Kattiwar side of the gulf, and insisted on the immediate reduction of the newly raised levies. His demands, after a great deal of evasion, were tardily complied with; and, indeed, much indifference was shown to every proposal emanating from the British government. The Khosas, a predatory tribe inhabiting Parkur to the north of Wagur, had at this period commenced their marauding incursions; but nothing could induce the Rao to defend his own territories from these freebooters, much less to en-

ter into any arrangement for the protection of those of his allies.

Evil and ungrateful as was this disposition on the part of the durbar, matters gradually became much worse. Luckmadass and his party, though indifferent, had never wished to come to an absolute rupture with the British government; but their influence speedily declined, and the Rao found far worse counsellors. He became addicted to constant intoxication and the lowest sensuality, and selected, as the associates of his pleasures, men of the meanest and most depraved characters, whose interest and object it appears to have been to instil into his mind constant suspicions of his new allies, and of their representative, Captain M'Murdo. Among these, as particularly worthy of execration, we may here mention Mohunjee Tucker, a wretch, who may with justice be called the evil genius of Rao Bharmuljee, and to whom all the subsequent misfortunes of that unhappy prince are mainly to be attributed.

The consequence of all this was just what might have been foreseen. The whole power fell into the hands of the Rao's profligate favourites; and every act of tyranny and injustice that could feed his avarice, or minister to his guilty enjoyments, was daily sanctioned. The very influence of the British government, by which it was insinuated, and generally believed, he would be supported under all circumstances, enabled him to obtain

enormous sums, as loans, from the merchants and other persons of property; and when this resource failed, every species of extortion was practised. The revenues for eight months in advance were seized from the cultivators of the soil, and twenty lacs of cories were exacted in fines from the household officers and managers of the districts, to be dissipated in the grossest debauchery. Bharmuljee himself was almost never seen outside his apartments; he paid no attention whatever to business, and daily became more odious to his people. He debauched the daughter of Futteh Mahommed, in revenge, as he declared, for Ibrahim Meyan's similar conduct to his sister; and women of all classes were publicly seized in the streets, to be dragged to the palace, and there despoiled of their ornaments and their virtue. No man possessed of any wealth was safe in the country. The Jharejahs, with scarcely an exception, retired to their own estates, and never visited Bhooj; and the ministers themselves, formerly so averse to British influence, having now lost both their property and power, entreated the interposition of Captain M'Murdo, as the only means of saving their lives. That officer was not by his instructions authorized to interfere; but, through his influence, he was enabled to obtain the appointment, as a member of the administration, of Ruttunsie Jutta, the nephew of Soondurjee Seojee, long a faithful and meritorious servant of the East India Company,

in the hope that his talents and conciliatory manners might gain him such an ascendancy over Bharmuljee, as gradually to withdraw him from his evil habits and associates.

The resident's own efforts were directed to the same object, but unhappily proved fruitless; nor did Ruttunsie unfortunately ever obtain sufficient influence to secure so desirable an end. The Rao's depraved habits and their disastrous effects became daily more aggravating, and at length ended in a crime which showed that all principle and humanity had been discarded and forgotten. Ladoba, the unfortunate son of Bhyjee Bawa, since the elevation of his cousin to the throne, had remained as a kind of state prisoner in the durbar; where, however, he was not rigidly guarded, but even frequently admitted as a companion at the debauched orgies of the Rao. His Highness and he had passed an evening together in drinking, and parted at a late hour with mutual professions of friendship; yet five minutes had scarcely elapsed before Ladoba was attacked by some armed men in passing through one of the courts of the Palace, and brutally assassinated.

The Rao attempted for a time to deny his participation in this cruel and treacherous transaction, which he declared to have been an unauthorized act of his guards, and even dissembled so far as to seize a musket and threaten to shoot the principal assassin; but it was soon discovered that the mur-

der had been committed by his express orders, issued at the moment Ladoba left him, and that he had himself witnessed it from a window. No punishment was inflicted on the perpetrators of the atrocity; and the chief of these, an Arab Jamidar, named Abdool Kareem, was not only not removed from his situation, but was promoted in rank, and received many additional marks of his master's favour. Three months had not elapsed, however, before the hand of justice overtook this miscreant; for, a cow having been killed, in the streets of Bhooj, by a soldier under his command, whom he attempted to shield from the punishment due to such an outrage on the prejudices of the Hindoos, he was put to death, together with the offender, by order of the Rao.

The murder of Ladoba was an act of wanton and uncalled-for tyranny. No provocation had been given on his part, nor could his claims to the throne, now laid aside and forgotten, interfere with the Rao's possession of it, sanctioned as it was by the solemn decision of the Jharejah brotherhood, and the countenance of the British government. We might in charity be inclined to attribute the assassination to frenzy proceeding from intoxication, did it not appear from Bharmuljee's subsequent conduct that his mind was the prey of every suspicion, however unjust or ridiculous, and that his cruelty to Ladoba's family

did not cease even with the murder of his unfortunate relative.

This barbarous proceeding on the part of the Rao occasioned much disgust in Cutch. Many of the Jharejah chiefs began now, when too late, to regret their indifference to the better-founded claims of Ladoba to the throne; most of them loudly expressed their abhorrence of his murder; and a feud broke out between the chieftains of Vinjan and Sandan in the Abbrassa, which may be traced to that cause. Bharmuljee's hatred against the Bhyauds had not been diminished by recent events, and he readily seized the opportunity of taking a part in the quarrel, and of levying a heavy fine on Sandan; an act of oppression, which, as will afterwards appear, was a main reason of his losing his throne.

The intelligence of these events reached Bombay, together with an affecting appeal from the father of the widow of the murdered prince, a petty chief in Kattiwar, who lived under the protection of the British government, and who implored it, by every principle of mercy and justice, to remonstrate with the Rao. He stated, that his daughter, now seven months advanced in pregnancy, had been placed in strict confinement at Bhooj, and entreated that she should be removed from that city and delivered over to his own protection; representing as an additional reason for this measure, that two children, formerly born to Ladoba, had been

put to death on the plea of their being females, and that no other fate could be looked for to the expected infant and its unfortunate mother. Instructions were in consequence issued to Captain M'Murdo, to express to the Rao the deep regret of the British government, that so horrid a deed should have been committed at his court—an act which must in some degree reflect on the government which supported him by its friendship; to desire the punishment of the assassins; and to require, as the only means of atonement, his attention and regard to the widow and her expected offspring. Letters were at the same addressed to the Jharejah chiefs, intimating the expectation of the honourable the Governor in Council, that the widow and her child would be treated with kindness and respect, and requesting them to write to, and to visit, the Rao, and to use their influence with him to secure so charitable a purpose.

This representation was viewed by Rao Bharmuljee with the greatest jealousy and distrust. He declared that the question was one entirely of a domestic nature, such as could admit of no foreign interference; and plainly intimated, that the further mention of it would lead to an open rupture. He immediately recalled his army from the Abbrassa, where it was still employed; augmented his troops in other quarters; and proceeded to make preparations of a nature quite at variance with the conduct of a friendly and pacific state.

The question of demanding the restoration of Anjar on all sums being paid, was agitated in the durbar; and a plan was proposed to surprise that town, by introducing a body of armed men in a number of grass carts. The native British agent at Bhooj was treated in a manner little short of contempt; and every thing showed that the Rao wanted the ability, rather than the inclination, to proceed to open hostility.

The levies which had been collected were chiefly sent into Wagur, under the pretence of punishing the Khosas of Parkur; but enough had been seen of the Rao's disposition, to induce the resident to call for reinforcements to the garrison of Anjar. A British regiment accordingly crossed the Runn from Guzerat; and application was made to the durbar for assistance in the way of supplies during its march. This request was not only refused, but the Rao ordered his troops under arms, prepared twenty-five pieces of field-artillery, and every arrangement was made to march, when the expedition was unexpectedly countermanded; the fumes of intoxication having evaporated, or his Highness having been deterred by the entreaty of some one remaining friend to his interests. On the approach of the battalion to Anjar, he stationed a body of troops ten miles in advance of Bhooj, and obstructed all communication between the two cities; but these were withdrawn a few days after

on the remonstrance of the resident, and through the influence of Ruttunsie.

Meanwhile the conduct of Rao Bharmuljee appeared in a different light to the court of Hyderabad: and that extraordinary government, on hearing of the murder of Ladoba, sent an ambassador to Bhooj to *condole* with him on the death of his cousin; to expatiate on the friendly disposition of the Ameers; and to offer him aid against any of the Jharejah chiefs who might prove refractory. Exaggerated reports had reached Sinde of the domestic disturbances in Cutch; and their Highnesses, from a fear that the Rao would again request the assistance of the English, determined, if possible, to keep these, their constant object of dread, at a distance, by offering the necessary support themselves. The envoy was received, and treated with great respect; but the durbar declined the assistance of the Ameers, purchased, as it is now believed it must have been, by the cession of the fortress of Luckput Bunder, on the eastern branch of the Indus, which, from its vicinity to their own frontier, had long been a desirable object of acquisition to the Sindians.

The Rao continued his reckless course of tyranny and dissipation. Excluding himself from the society of all except the dissolute companions of his pleasures, he was alike indifferent to the stings of conscience, and the sufferings of his subjects. A glimpse into the interior of the palace at this

period is afforded by a letter which the widow of Ladoba contrived to send to her friends through the medium of a slave girl; and in which she describes Rao Bharmuljee as having determined to violate her person, and murder her infant. The latter was saved through the entreaties of the minister Luckmadass, but the fate of the unfortunate mother has never been properly ascertained. Cutch was now fallen into as miserable a state as it had been in during the worst times of the misgovernment of Rao Raydhim. Open rebellion and faction were only prevented by a dread of incurring the vengeance of the British government, to which the Rao's hatred and dislike daily increased; and he was so infatuated, as to allow these feelings to evince themselves on every occasion. He never spoke of Captain M'Murdo but in terms of the grossest abuse; and, whenever intoxication supplied him with sufficient courage or candour, his designs against Anjar were loudly boasted of. His actions, moreover, in some measure, kept pace with his declarations. He put an end to the trade of the merchants of Anjar, by laying such duties on the cotton bought by them within his territories, as to render it impossible for them to send it to Toonah Bunder; and, to complete the measure of folly, he prohibited vessels belonging to any other port from engaging in their service.

These aggressions were not permitted to proceed without remonstrance on the part of the resident.

He had before taken various opportunities to entreat the Rao to discard his profligate habits and advisers. He now, with a degree of courage and decision equally creditable,—at a time, too, when every thing foreboded treachery, and when he had been privately apprized of intentions to murder him,—paid a visit to the capital, and personally warned Bharmuljee of the danger and folly of his conduct, and of its inevitable consequences. The particulars of Captain M'Murdo's interviews at the durbar have been related to me by the late Major Noble, an officer who accompanied him; and I have since been able to learn the real intentions of the Rao from persons then in his service. All accounts concur in stating, that he had given his consent to Tukkur Mohunjee for the assassination of the resident; and that it was only when that gentleman appeared in the durbar, that his resolution happily failed him, and the projected atrocity was countermanded. No respect, however, was shown to the resident or his suite on their visits to the durbar; on the contrary, they were jostled by the troops and attendants as they passed through the courts of the palace; their salutations were not even returned; and the populace appear to have been instructed, or, at all events, permitted, to assail them with ribaldry and abuse. The Rao himself was found intoxicated on every occasion of Captain M'Murdo's waiting upon him. He showed himself indifferent to every

proposal which was made to him, and contented himself with flatly denying ever having given cause of offence. To a proposition to reduce the troops, agreeably to an article in the treaty, he turned a deaf ear; and the resident left Bhooj without having gained any one object.

Discontent and anarchy had now reached their height in this devoted province. Nutthoo Metha and others of the ministers fled, as the only means of saving their lives; and Luckmadass and his party became entirely favourable to the introduction of the British influence. The Rao's interference with Sandan, and an attempt he made to impose a tribute on the Jharejah chiefs as a body, gave great dissatisfaction to the Bhyauds, who addressed a letter to the Bombay government, in which they set forth that they had never been in the habit of making pecuniary payments, and entreated assistance, in the event of the durbar's attempting to enforce its unjust claims; finally, they declared their conviction, that the interposition of British authority was absolutely necessary for a thorough reformation in the affairs of Cutch. The Bombay government did not consider itself called on to interfere in a quarrel between the Jharejahs and their sovereign, whose claim to the crown they themselves had so recently acknowledged; nor did it wish to take any decided measures, till the Rao's conduct should be such as to render actual hostility inevitable. This soon occur-

red; for Bharmuljee, who had been daily becoming more and more infatuated, at length formed the resolution of attacking, by surprise, the town of Anjar, over some of the villages attached to which he had previously tried to assume an unwarrantable degree of authority. With this view, he summoned all persons holding lands of the durbar by military tenure, including Meyanahs, to Bhooj; and marched to Lackhoond with five thousand men, and eleven pieces of cannon. Before adopting this step he had, partly by promises of future forbearance towards them, and partly by intimidation, induced several of the Jharejahs to accompany his army with their quotas of troops, or a portion of them.

The Rao attempted to disguise his real designs, by intimating to the resident his intention to move into Wagur to punish his refractory subjects in that province; though this pretence was of itself rendered glaringly improbable, from his having just previously recalled all his garrisons from that quarter. Preparations being made at Anjar to repel attack, he was forced to relinquish his views on that place, but he determined to adopt another mode of insulting the British government, and of showing his disregard of the treaty he had entered into. He suddenly marched against Arrysier, a town in the eastern extremity of Cutch, the chief of which was then residing at Anjar, under the protection of the resident, and engaged through

his mediation in the amicable settlement of some disputes between himself and the durbar. Captain M'Murdo remonstrated in the most forcible manner with the Rao on the injustice of his conduct; reminded him that the Honourable Company had become, in virtue of the treaty, the mediator between him and the Wagur Jemidars—that Killian Sing, the chief of Arrysier, had been called to Anjar, at his Highness's own request, to adjust all differences; and ended his communication in these words: "Should you be determined in destroying Arrysier, be guided by your own pleasure; but in so doing, there will be no distinction from entirely throwing off all connexion with the British government.

This intimation passed unheeded by the Rao, who, contrary to every advice except that of Tukkur Mohunjee, and his confederates, continued to carry on the siege of Arrysier; and it was only after the expiration of two months, when he found that fort likely to baffle all his attempts, that he again thought of adopting a conciliatory tone towards Captain M'Murdo. He then addressed a letter to that officer, filled with general expressions of friendship towards himself and his government, without referring in any way to the communications made to him regarding his late proceedings; but this step, could it at any time have been effectual, was now too late: for the treaty between the governments had in the interim been sus-

pended; and the Marquis of Hastings had declared Rao Bharmuljee a public enemy, and had given instructions to proceed to the extremity of war against him. The sole object of his lordship had been to effect the establishment of a government in Cutch, disposed to maintain the relations with the British power in India, fixed by the treaty of 1816; and as it was hopeless to expect this from a prince of Rao Bharmuljee's character and conduct, orders were issued to accept the spontaneous and long proffered co-operation of the Jharejahs for his dethronement, as well as to request that body of noblemen to elevate to the musnud whomsoever they considered the lawful heir to that dignity. To give full effect to these instructions, a British army was forthwith assembled, under the command of Sir William Grant Keir, at Anjar, where it was joined by Visrajee, the two Pragjees, Allyajee, and Myaminyee, the five principal Jharejah chiefs in Cutch, who expressed their readiness and anxiety to co-operate in the measures to be adopted.

The Rao, who had during this interval entered into a compromise with the chief of Arrysier, quickly returned to Bhooj, where he was seized with a violent illness. He was consequently unable himself to make any preparations, or give orders in person; but his partizans and favourites collected a considerable force; and on the approach of the British army to the capital, some

skirmishing took place. Captain M'Murdo then intimated to Bharmuljee the intention of his government to organize anew the affairs of Cutch, in concert with the Jharejah Byaud; and called on him either to stand by the consequences of resistance, or to surrender himself, promising, in the event of his adopting the latter alternative, that he should meet with safety and consideration. This proposal was not attended to till the Hill-Fort of Bhorjeeah, which overlooks the city of Bhooj, was taken by escalade on the following day; upon which, through the negociation of the minister, Luckmadass, Rao Bharmuljee was brought to the tent of the resident, and placed under a guard of British troops. Every respect was paid to him, consistently with the safety of his person, and the kindest attention shown to his health, which, from constant intemperance, and his recent indisposition, was now so completely broken, that he was scarcely able to walk or articulate.

A few days after his surrender, Rao Bharmuljee was formally deposed, and placed in a palace built by Futteh Mahommed, which was selected for his residence. The Jharejah chiefs were then left entirely to themselves to choose his successor; and it was generally expected that the election would have been in favour of the infant son of the murdered Prince Ladoba; but, strange as it may seem, after a perusal of these pages, the only son of Bharmuljee, a child of three years of age, re-

ceived the unanimous votes of the Bhyaud, and was accordingly raised to the throne by the name of Rao Dessul. The minister, Luckmadass Metah, is understood to have secured, by his influence, this decision in favour of the offspring of his fallen master; an act of disinterestedness and forgiveness of injuries, which, if true, is highly creditable, when it is recollected that his own life was often in imminent danger from the violence and cruelty of the Rao, and that his property had been seized by the orders of that now unhappy prince. But Luckmadass, and many others with whom I have conversed on this topic, appear even then to have viewed Bharmuljee rather as the weak and infatuated minion of a base and profligate party, from which it was impossible to detach him, than as a man by nature cruel and tyrannical; and the minister's hostility against him seems to have been much softened at the crisis of his fall. Necessary as was his dethronement, several of the Jharejahs, acting from the same impression, still wished, after that decided step, that the government should be carried on in his name; and when they found that the proposal was objected to, they evinced their respect for his failings and misfortunes, by entreating that kindness should be shown him in his confinement, and that the succession should remain in his family. The election of the Bhyaud proved in the end more fortunate than if it had fallen on the weakly child of Ladoba, (whom, however, they declared

the next heir to Dessuljee, in the event of his not living to have issue,) as he died a few weeks after, and the race of Bhyjee Bawa, the legitimate branch of the royal family of Cutch, became extinct.

The next requisite step towards the settlement of affairs, was the appointment of a regency, to carry on the government during the minority of his Highness Rao Dessul; and the Jharejahs were again requested to nominate a sufficient number of persons for the purpose. Their choice fell on Jharejahs Visrajee of Roha, and Pretrajee of Nangurcha, the two most powerful chiefs in Cutch, Oodowjee, a Rajgoor Brahmin, the minister Luckmadass Wullubjee, and Sett Ruttunsie Jetta. The name of the British resident was also included; but as the object of the Governor-General was to render Cutch, as far as possible, an independent state, the arrangement was at first objected to; and it was only through the earnest solicitations of the Jharejah Bhyaud, combined with those of the existing members of the regency, that his lordship at length consented to the appointment of Captain M'Murdo as president of the latter body.

The measures which had been adopted at Bhooj gave satisfaction generally to all classes throughout the country; and no town evinced any unwillingness to acknowledge the new Rao and the authority of the regency, except Luckput Bunder, which was garrisoned by Arabs of whose submission doubts were for some time entertained, but it finally sur-

rendered without any military operations being undertaken against it. Matters being now settled on a firm basis, the regency proceeded to correct the innumerable abuses in every department of the state, and to discharge the useless and expensive levies of troops which Bharmuljee had maintained. A British force was subsidized for the defence of the country and the support of the government; and the honour of guarding the Rao's palace was given up entirely to the Jharejahs, to the perfect exclusion of the low-born wretches whom the late Rao had introduced to that responsible duty.

The tyranny and injustice of Rao Bharmuljee had scarcely been crushed, and a new and better order of things introduced through the means of the British government, when the hand of Providence seemed to join in depriving Cutch of some of the instruments of cruelty. A violent shock of an earthquake, attended with some extraordinary circumstances, levelled with the dust nearly all the walled towns in the country, and anticipated an intention, which had often been conceived, of dismantling some of these nests of discontent and treason. The desolation which ensued can scarcely be imagined. In Bhooj alone, seven thousand houses were rent to their foundations, and twelve hundred persons buried in the ruins. Anjar suffered equally in proportion, and much injury was sustained, with the loss of many lives, at Mandavie and other large towns. The phenomena which

accompanied this awful visitation, it is unnecessary to detail here, as they have already, I understand, been published in the Transactions of the Literary Society of Bombay.

In conformity with the spirit of the measures which have been detailed in these pages, and, as better calculated to maintain a firm and honourable alliance between the two states, a new treaty, containing, in addition to most of the articles of that of 1816, many others, adapted to the improved condition of affairs, was shortly after concluded between the governments. It will be seen on a reference to it, that the British government wished carefully to abstain from all interference in the Rao's internal authority; whilst it agreed to guarantee his power and the "integrity of his dominions" from all enemies, foreign and domestic. A boon of a similar description was extended to the Jharejah chiefs, who had established a claim on us by their conduct during the late revolution, and whose possessions were also secured to them on their consenting to preserve their female children. In return for these important concessions, the advantages derived by the British government are almost nominal; for, with the exception of an annual subsidy of two lacs and eighty thousand rupees, equal to the support of one-half of the force which has been generally required, we receive nothing from the Bhooj durbar, to which Anjar and its dependencies have since been restored. In enu-

merating the benefits of the alliance, we must not omit, however, the grand victory in favour of humanity in the abolition of infanticide; a horrid practice, which it has been our object, ever since our connexion with Cutch and Kattiwar, to put a stop to, and which we have certainly succeeded in diminishing in these countries.

If we take into consideration the dreadful state of affairs which had existed for years before we entered Cutch, we must conclude, that the new arrangements were entirely in favour of that kingdom; for had not the British government interfered and the strong arm of power, in this instance upheld by justice, been stretched out to rescue that unhappy country from confusion and anarchy, it must soon have ceased to be a state; and it would either have fallen into the iron grasp of the military despots of Sinde, or, if these had been excluded, Cutch would have become a prey, as before, to its own numerous petty tyrants. Indeed, it is impossible to conceive in what excesses the profligacy and imbecility of the government, and, we may add, the general depravity of the people of this wretched province, with whom bloodshed and treason had become as "household words," might have ended.

POSTSCRIPT, 15th June 1829.—Since the period at which our narration closes, Cutch has continued to enjoy all the blessings of English rule. Dis-

turbance has at intervals existed, but when serious, it has always been the result of famine, or causes of a similar nature, which no human government could control. The rains of 1823 and 1824 failed entirely, and the misery which this occasioned in a country solely dependent on the heavens for water may be conceived. Many of the inhabitants emigrated into Guzerat, and returned after the season of scarcity was over; while others less peaceable, crossed into Parkur and Sinde, where, combining with military mercenaries from these countries, and adventurers from the neighbouring provinces, they formed themselves into bands, and made incursions into Cutch, several of the villages of which they plundered and destroyed. The more favourable season of 1825, together with the new and less oppressive system in the collection of the Rao's revenue, which was at that time introduced by the request of the regency, under the superintendence of the assistant resident, had the effect of putting an end to the outrages of these plunderers; most of whom had been forced by hunger to adopt their lawless proceedings, and on the re-appearance of plenty returned quietly to their native fields, which, with a few exceptions, the lenity of the durbar allowed them to retain unmolested.

The protection afforded to these lawless depredators, and to others of the same description, in the territories of the Sinde government, has brought us at different times into collision with the Ameers;

and we have been forced on two occasions (1820 and 1825,) to assemble large bodies of troops in Cutch, in order to awe these chiefs into a maintenance of their treaties. By a new agreement concluded between the British and Cutch governments in 1822, Anjar and its dependencies were restored to the Rao, on his consenting to pay to us yearly the estimated revenue, viz. eighty-eight thousand rupees; making the entire sum we annually receive from his Highness to amount to two lacs, eighty-eight thousand rupees. From the famine which has been mentioned and other causes, this subsidy has been frequently ill paid, sometimes even remitted, and altogether has proved totally inadequate to support the heavy expences which have been entailed on us by our connexion with Cutch. Our government, it is true, have gained this province as a frontier to our great and glorious empire; but its advantages in that respect are even doubtful; while, from its being a constant and unsatisfactory drain on our finances, the evils arising from the alliance have been great and positive. On this subject, however, it becomes not me to enlarge.

Of the persons alluded to in the foregoing narrative, some further mention may be interesting. Captain M'Murdo died soon after the treaty of 1819 was concluded,—much too soon for his country, and to the regret equally of the European and native community in Cutch, of which province he may be said to have been the deliverer.

He expired, and was buried at Burrunwao, near Palanswa, in Wagur, where his tomb is carefully protected by the inhabitants, and is an object of veneration to which persons still make pilgrimages from a distance. Surely an amiable man need seek no higher reward than this for his exertions. His Highness Rao Dessul has now attained the age of thirteen years, and promises to fulfil the expectations of his subjects to the utmost. He has acquired a slight knowledge of the English language, from the instructions of the Reverend Mr Gray, the chaplain at Bhooj, who has also instilled into his youthful mind a taste for astronomy and some other sciences.

His father, the Ex-Rao Bharmuljee, still continues a prisoner. The unhappy man has not yet attained the age of thirty-four, after having passed ten years of his life in confinement. When I first saw him, five years ago, he was a squalid miserable wretch, still in Futteh Mahommed's palace; and, from the period of his dethronement up to that time, had never been allowed to see his son, nor, I believe, any of the members of his family. Colonel Pottinger, however, who came to Bhooj as resident in 1825, and who, to the credit of his feelings,

> "Pitied child and parent separated
> By the stern mandate of unfeeling law,"

determined to ameliorate his condition, and ob-

tained the sanction of government for his removal to a more comfortable residence. Since then he has occupied capacious apartments, elegantly fitted up, in his son's palace; where, though still under a guard of British troops, he is allowed every liberty consistently with his safe custody. He is even permitted to go out twice a-week, when he chooses to take an airing, accompanied by an European officer and a few Seapoys. His time is chiefly passed in the society of his son, the present Rao, in whose lessons he appears to take great interest, and for whom he entertains the strongest personal attachment. In the placid and dignified deportment of this unfortunate prince, none could now recognize the treacherous murderer, and the cruel despot who inflicted such accumulated miseries on his subjects. He is temperate even to a degree, and his contrition for the murder of his cousin is believed to be heartfelt and sincere. It has, however, evidently affected his conscience frequently; and, with the view of atoning for his crime, he, in the year 1827, sent the ashes of Ladoba, at a great expence, under the charge of a body of Brahmins, to the holy city of Benares, to be consigned with appropriate ceremonies to the waters of the Ganges. Such are the uses of adversity, which has not failed to exert its chastening effect upon Rao Bharmuljee. I should not omit to mention that the remains of Rao Raydhun have also been lately transferred to the same sacred city, to expiate his apostacy from

the faith of his forefathers, and the many horrors which, as a Mahommedan enthusiast, he brought upon his country.

Kesser Bhyee, the sister of Rao Bharmuljee, was eventually married to the Nawaub of Joonaghur, in Kattiwar, at whose court she died, it is said, by unfair means. The natives of Cutch have a story that her death was occasioned by poison inserted into her slippers. On the conclusion of the first treaty, Mahommed Meyan Sotah, and Sewiraj Hunsraj, who were obliged to disgorge immense sums of money which they had appropriated to their own use, fell into insignificance. They both died about the middle of the year 1818, it was supposed by poison. Hussain Meyan still lingers out a disreputable existence. He pays an annual visit to Bhooj, the scene of his father's greatness, and his own dishonour; while his gross and bloated appearance denotes the nature of his pursuits. Futteh Mahommed had some other sons, but none of them are known in Cutch. His daughter, whose person Rao Bharmuljee violated, has sunk to the lowest state of prostitution.

After the treaty of 1819, the affairs of Cutch fell chiefly to be managed by the British resident, the minister Luckmadass, and Sett Ruttunsie Jetta, the Jharejah members of the regency declining for the most part to interfere. The most important of the latter, Visrajee of Roha, was detected in treasonable communication with some rebels

in 1825, and was expelled from the administration, and banished from the capital; another chief being elected in his stead. His expulsion was followed in 1827 by the disgrace of Ruttunsie, who was found to be a defaulter to the state, as well as implicated in several mean and dishonourable transactions, which in the end overwhelmed himself and the whole family of Soonderjee Seojee in ruin, and lost them the esteem and confidence of the British government. Rao Dessul begins to show an interest in public affairs, and frequently holds durbars; but the chief management remains as yet in the hands of the resident and Luckmadass; and although the latter was believed formerly to be an actor in some of the melancholy scenes we have described, it is but justice to say, that his conduct now is marked by integrity. I may add, that he is the only individual at present in Cutch, who, from his birth and general respectability, is entitled to the elevation he has attained.

17*th April* 1830.—Sir John Malcolm, on his visit to Bhooj in March 1830, at the request of the native government, ordered the guard to be entirely removed from the Ex-Rao Bharmuljee.

Bhooj Residency, 1*st January* 1830.

ADDENDA.

THE following account of the natives of Cutch was written for a friend some years ago. Since then circumstances are somewhat altered, but nevertheless, I shall add it here. It will be observed that it contains little, except opinions, in addition to what Mr Elphinstone and Captain M'Murdo have said on the same subject.

The number of inhabitants in Cutch is estimated at present at three hundred and fifty thousand, of whom one-third are Mahommedans, and the remainder Hindoos of various castes. The population was formerly much greater, but many causes have lately operated to diminish it. The famine and pestilence which ravaged the northern parts of Guzerat, Kattiwar, &c. in 1812, deprived Cutch of half its inhabitants. The oppressive nature of the government during the reigns of the Raos Lacca, Ghore, and Rahiden, and the constant wars which were carried on by Futteh Mahommed, added much to the evil; while, latterly, a succes-

sion of unfavourable seasons has forced many of the Ryots to migrate into Sinde, or to seek for subsistence in other countries.

The natives of Cutch are stronger and stouter, and even handsomer, than those of this part of India in general; and some of them, particularly the Rajpoots, bear marks of a superior and military caste. The women of the higher classes are generally considered good-looking. To a casual spectator, the whole population appears sunk in ignorance and apathy, but closer observation shows that this is not the case. The Ryots are found to be intelligent to a degree that is surprising; and the ingenuity of the workmen is too generally celebrated to require comment here. The palace at Mandavie, and the tomb of Rao Lacca at Bhooj, are beautiful specimens of their skill in architecture; while the gold and silver ornaments manufactured in Cutch, and so well known and highly prized by Europeans, display a taste and nicety of hand, unequalled by any Asiatic nation except the Chinese. There is scarcely any piece of mechanism which, by proper explanation and superintendence, may not be imitated by the goldsmiths and carpenters at Bhooj; and I have known one of their gun-locks passed for an English one, and firmly believed to be so.

I do not believe that the natives of Cutch are more immoral than those of Hindoostan in general; but if they are found so, it should be remem-

bered that their necessities have been greater, and that they are but now recovering from the effects of an unjust, cruel, and, consequently, demoralizing government, which continued so late as the year 1819. They are, for the most part, peaceable, obedient, and well-affected to their rulers; while robberies and murders are seldom heard of, except by the Meyanahs, a class which will be hereafter particularly mentioned.

The use of opium and the hookah is almost universal in the country, and in these the Cutchee finds a solace for every distress of mind or of body. Whether at home or abroad, the hookah is his constant companion. He has recourse to it at every moment of leisure; and I have myself travelled with horsemen in the service of his Highness the Rao, who, although they kept their horses at a smart pace, contrived to smoke all the while. In every species of native society in Cutch, the influence of opium is apparent. The character of the people has even acquired a dull and phlegmatic cast from its effects, though it must be remarked, that these bear no proportion to the immense quantity of the drug that is used. With the exception of an unwillingness on the part of the opium-eaters to exert themselves, which probably arises partly from natural laziness, the use of this powerful narcotic does not appear to destroy the powers of the body, nor to enervate the mind to the degree that might be imagined. Visrajee, the Jharejah chief of Roha,

whose name has been famous in the history of Cutch for the last sixty years, has, during the whole of his life, indulged freely in opium, and has suffered so little from its debilitating effects, that he was last year detected in ambitious projects against the government, and banished to his own castle in consequence. He is now at the age of eighty, paralyzed by years, but his mind is unimpaired. This case is not a singular one ; and, on investigation, I am convinced it will be found in general, that the natives do not suffer much from the use of opium. No doubt, however, East Indian opium is less deleterious in its effects than that which is produced in Turkey.

It is generally taken in small cups rubbed up with water, and the quantities that are swallowed would almost exceed belief. Its stimulating effects are sometimes very apparent. On one occasion, I had made a very fatiguing night march with a Cutchee horseman. In the morning, after having travelled above thirty miles, I was obliged to assent to his proposal of halting for a few minutes, which he employed in sharing a quantity of about two drachms of opium between himself and his jaded horse. The effect of the dose was soon evident on both ; for the horse finished a journey of forty miles with great apparent facility, and the rider absolutely became more active and intelligent.

With the exception of the Jharejah Rajpoots, the Hindoos of Cutch do not differ from those of

other parts of India. The Jharejahs are the aristocracy of the country, and are all more or less connected with the family of the Rao. They trace their descent from Sacko Goraro, a prince who reigned in Sinde a thousand years ago, four of whose sons, Moor, Oner, Phool, and Munyabhaee, emigrated into Cutch, on account of some family dissensions. The two last had no issue. The posterity of Moor ended in the third generation at Sacko Phoolanee, whose name is still known and celebrated throughout this province. From Oner descended the present Jam of Nuwanuggur, and the Rajpoot Jharejahs of Cutch. Hoomeerjee, one of his descendants four hundred years ago, had four sons, Khenjar, Rhayebjee, Sayebjee, and Aleyajee. From the first of these the Rao is lineally descended; and all the present Jharejahs, with a few exceptions, who claim still higher birth, derive their origin from the other three.

There are about two hundred and fifty Jharejah chiefs in Cutch. All of them hold their lands in feu from the Rao, as their liege-lord, for services they or their ancestors have performed, or for relationship to his family. They are termed the Bhyaud, or brotherhood of the Rao, and are his hereditary advisers. On any male child being born in his Highness's family, a portion of the royal domains is allotted to him and his successors. The same principle is carried into effect in the families of the nobles, whose lands are subdivided for the

benefit of their relations, who are called the Bhyaud of the chief. It is evident that this system would soon reduce the whole property into an immense number of small portions; but the barbarity of their customs has afforded a check to this in the inhuman practice of infanticide. This, it is known, is not uncommon among the Rajpoots of India. The Jharejahs of Cutch trace the custom to Jarrah, one of the posterity of Oner, above-mentioned, from whom they derive their name, and who first showed the example, by putting to death seven of his daughters, seven hundred years ago. His descendants, it is to be feared, have not confined their practice to females only.

The humanity of the British government since the period of its connexion with Cutch, has been much exerted in trying to check this horrid custom; but the prejudices which lead to it are so firmly rooted, and the interest of the Rajpoot families is so much identified in its continuance, that I have no doubt it is still secretly carried on in the private recesses of the Jharejahs' forts, where it is impossible to watch them. Indeed, the returns furnished to the Bhooj durbar show such an immense disproportion between their male and female children, that the fact can scarcely be disputed. The infants, it is said, are usually put to death by opium applied to the breast of the mother, or are drowned in milk.

The Jharejahs intermarry with the families of

other Rajpoots; but as they are all descended from a common ancestor, they consider it incestuous to unite themselves with the women of their own tribe; and to this unfortunate regulation of their caste may be attributed in a great degree their adherence to infanticide. Nuns and vestals meet with no respect in Indian society; indeed, it is a disgrace to a woman and her relations if she is not married and settled with her husband at an age which would be considered childhood in England. No respectable matches can be found in Cutch or the neighbouring countries for the Jharejah females; and the consequence unhappily is, that their preservation only leads to shame and prostitution. This is an evil arising from a state of society which the hand of Omnipotence alone can suddenly improve; though it is to be hoped, that, by the continuance of our rule, and the gradual dissemination of enlightened opinions, it will eventually cease. No government can do more than ours has done to suppress infanticide; and the treaty of 1819 with Cutch, is a proof of the extraordinary sacrifices which have been made to gain this object. By a provision in that document, we engaged separately to protect the possessions of all the Jharejah chiefs, on their consenting to preserve their female children; thus entering into a treaty not only with the prince of the country, but also with two or three hundred of his nobles, and thereby cementing an alliance from which, however detrimental to our

interests, or ruinous to our finances, we can never be relieved. It is needless almost to add, that infanticide, when perpetrated, is practised so secretly as to defy all detection. As a proof of the pride and cruelty of the Cutch Rajpoots, I may here mention, that at the battle of Jarrah in 1762, they massacred all their women and children, amounting to several thousands, to prevent their falling into the hands of Sindians.

The Jharejahs have a tradition that, when they first entered Cutch they were Mahommedans, but that two hundred years afterwards, when the whole power of the country was in their hands, they resumed the name and customs of the Hindoos; and they have been considered Rajpoots ever since. In a religion which admits of no proselytes, this is astonishing; but the story seems well supported by circumstances. They still retain many Mahommedan customs; they take oaths equally on the Koran and Shastras; and they refer sometimes to the one and sometimes to the other on subjects of law and morality. They employ Mussulman books, and eat from their hands, and, to crown all, his Highness the Rao, when he appears in public, alternately worships God in a Hindoo pagoda and a Mahommedan mosque. Rao Lucca erected a temple at Bhooj to the memory of a famous saint of Bagdad, the Peeran Peer, about the middle of last century, and his descendant, Rao Dessul, in person, lays his oblations at the shrine generally every Fri-

day, which is the Mahommedan day of prayer. The Bhooj durbar fits out a ship annually at Mandavie to convey pilgrims to Mecca, who are fed and supported during the voyage by the liberality of the Rao; and, although this is without doubt a remnant of the Mogul sway, and was, I believe, the tenure by which the sovereigns of Cutch held their dominions from the Delhi emperors; the fact of its being still maintained is a proof, with the others, of the anomalous opinions which the Jharejahs entertain on the subject of religion. The royal family of Cutch have never objected to form matrimonial alliances with Mahommedans when the match was suitable, or when a political object was to be gained. Rao Gore gave one of his female relations in marriage to Surufraz Khan, a prince of the house of Calora in Sinde; and more lately, Kesser Bhye, the sister of Rao Bharmuljee, was united to the Nawaub of Joonaghur.

The Mahommedans of Cutch are of the same degenerate caste as is to be found throughout the western side of India. The only class particularly worthy of notice, as being peculiar in habits and customs, is the Meeanahs, who have of late attracted attention by their plunders and depredations.

The Meeanahs claim the same descent as the Jharejahs, and boast, that, while the latter became apostates to the Mahommedan creed, they

remained steady in the faith. Be this as it may, they have lost all the honour and respectability of the Rajpoots, and have been, from time immemorial, a body of outcasts and marauders, ready on all occasions to take advantage of the troubles of the state to commit their outrages.

It may excite surprise that during so many centuries these plunderers should have been permitted to remain as a scourge to Cutch ; but the question is solved when we find, that, though always injurious to the people, they were frequently useful to the government, under whose standard, at the season of exaction and oppression, they generally ranged themselves, and from which, even, they have at various times received grants of land. As an instance of their services, it may be mentioned, that the immense army of the Nawaub of Ahmedabad, which invaded Cutch in 1718, was forced to evacuate it, chiefly from all its supplies being cut off by the Meeanahs.

The vigour of Futteh Mahommed's government required no assistance from outlaws, and as their depredations had arisen to a height formerly unknown, at the confused period at which his power commenced, one of his first measures was to endeavour to extirpate them from Cutch. In this he nearly succeeded ; but of late years several of them returned and lived in villages among the hills, peculiar to themselves, where they obtained a scanty subsistence by cultivating the fields. The

unfortunate seasons of 1823 and 1824 forced many of them to emigrate into Sinde, where, uniting with other adventurers, they formed themselves into bands, and made forays into Cutch, several of the villages of which they burned and plundered.

The reappearance of plenty in 1825 has brought back many of them to their fields, which the lenity of government now allows them to retain unmolested; while the others have either fixed their residence in Sinde, awaiting a favourable opportunity to review their incursions, or have paid the penalty of their offences against the durbar. The bold and determined manner in which most of the latter have met their fate at the place of execution is worthy almost of antiquity, and certainly of a better cause. One of their chiefs, named Oomriah, was captured by a detachment of our troops in a skirmish in April last, and was shortly after blown from the mouth of a cannon, according to the usual custom of capital punishment in Cutch. Though emaciated with confinement and the pain of his wounds, he stepped forward to meet death in this appalling shape with his spirit undaunted; and after seeing some of his companions blown to atoms, resolutely walked up to the instrument of his destruction, to which he declined to be tied, and placing his body to the muzzle, demanded permission to be his own executioner. The remnant of these "Children of the Mist" still retain all the predatory customs and habits of their fore-

fathers. Their daring courage and their adroitness make them a constant object of dread to the peaceful villager; and the confidence of the inhabitants of Cutch is only maintained by posts of British troops stationed at various places. The Meeanahs may complain that there is a curse upon their race; their name is associated with every thing that is atrocious; no crime is committed in Cutch that is not attributed to their hands; and all classes join in execration of them.

POSTSCRIPT, June 1829.—The above account was written in the beginning of 1826, when Cutch was suffering from the depredations of these plunderers. Since then a succession of good seasons and a steady and improved system of administration have altered the aspect of affairs, and the Meeanahs are now seldom heard of. In 1827, the Bhooj durbar published a general pardon for all their past offences; a measure as politic as it was merciful, and which has been attended by the happy effect of bringing back nearly all those who had remained in Sinde.

MEDICAL TOPOGRAPHY

OF

BHOOJ.

Bhooj Residency, September 16th, 1828.

To the Secretary of the
Medical Board, Bombay,

Sir,—In obedience to your letter of the 1st instant, which reached me this morning, I proceed without delay to submit to the Medical Board, answers to the various questions contained in your circular to Superintending Surgeons, of the 23d of April 1827, together with such general remarks on the medical topography of Bhooj as occur to me.—I have the honour to be, &c.

James Burnes.

MEDICAL TOPOGRAPHY

OF

BHOOJ.

The province of Cutch extends between the sixty-eighth and seventy-second degrees of longitude east of Greenwich, and the twenty-second and twenty-fourth degrees of north latitude.

Its extreme length does not exceed a hundred and sixty-five miles from east to west. Its breadth from north to south is fifty-two miles at the widest part, and only fifteen at the narrowest.

It has the Gulf of Cutch and the Indian Ocean to the south; the great Northern Runn, which is flooded with salt water from May to October every year, on the north and east; and the Koree River, or Eastern Branch of the Indus, to the west.

The general appearance of Cutch is barren and uninteresting. Most of the villages are ruinous

and dilapidated, bearing marks alike of the shocks of nature and the destructive powers of man. A few fields in their neighbourhood are cultivated, while the remainder of the country presents nothing to the view but a rocky and sandy waste, which in many places is scarcely relieved by a show of vegetation. Water is scarce, and often brackish; and although the population does not exceed three hundred and fifty thousand souls, the produce of the land under cultivation is insufficient for their support; so that Cutch, even in the best seasons, is dependent on Sinde for supplies of grain.

The climate for nine months in the year is comparatively temperate and agreeable. The approach of October is dreaded equally by the native and European population as extremely unhealthy and oppressive. The temperature in the hot season is high; and a residency in the cantonment of Bhooj, during the months of April and May, is rendered almost intolerable by hurricanes, which envelope the houses in dust and sand, and from which glass windows are scarcely a protection.

The monsoon is always moderate, and sometimes fails altogether. It would almost appear that those seasons in which it has failed, although the want of rain in a country almost entirely dependent for water on the firmament must ever be attended with the greatest distress and misery

to the native population, have been the most favourable for the maintenance of health in the European constitution. Cutch was very healthy in the years 1823 and 1824, but the contrary, in a melancholy degree, in 1825, after a considerable monsoon.

Cutch is considered unhealthy by the natives of other parts of the Bombay Residency; and they can only be induced to visit it by the greater pay and advantages of a field station. There seems no great reason for this prejudice; for, I believe that a reference to the hospital returns of the native regiments at Bhooj would show that the troops are as healthy there as in most other places. I must confess, however, that I have known many persons from Bombay, servants in particular, perfectly useless from continued sickness in Cutch, who recovered their health and energies the moment they left it.

The most common diseases among the natives are fever and rheumatism; and it may be remarked, that cholera morbus, which has been so fatal in the neighbouring countries, has never made much progress in Cutch. Fever is the prevailing disease among Europeans. From personal experience, I may say that the first attacks have always been the most dangerous; and have usually been in the form of bilious remittents, leaving behind them a tendency to intermittent fever, liable to produce a paroxysm on any exciting cause,

which the patient has never been able entirely to throw off. Indeed, with all the advantages of sea air, I never was at any station where recoveries from fever were so tedious and incomplete as in Cutch.

In elucidation of this fact, which, without explanation, might be considered a mere opinion, I can state, that, of the only five officers now at Bhooj, including myself, who have been resident for three years in Cutch, every one is subject to periodical paroxysms in the manner I have mentioned; and that scarcely one has ever been entirely free from them for six months since the first grand attack, which, in every case, was shortly after arriving at the station. Luckily the paroxysms are never very severe; and, as the sulphate of quinine is a certain check, the inconvenience is only temporary, while the constitution, from being habituated, appears to suffer but little injury.

Some stations in Cutch are particularly noxious, such as Narrona, a village in a marsh, twenty-four miles north-east of Bhooj, near the Runn, where no troops are now stationed; and Luckput Bunder, where the water is so bad, that there is a tradition throughout the country, (silly, indeed, but still illustrative of the native prejudice against it,) that a draught of it impairs the powers of man. Mandavie is generally a delightful and healthy station; and the Cutch government, with great liberality, have lately fitted up the old palace

of the Rao at that place in the most comfortable manner for the sick officers of the brigade. Still patients do not appear to me to make good recoveries there from serious illnesses; and there are times, particularly in October, when being at the sea-coast in Cutch is little protection against attacks of disease. I have known nine Europeans, being all who were at Mandavie at the time, in bed with fever at the same moment, and scarcely a native servant well enough to be able to attend on them, though some of the party had left Bhooj in health a few days previous.

The oppression in the atmosphere about the close of the monsoon at Mandavie is excessive; and the hot wind in May is sometimes so scorching, that its effects last year were justly compared by a gentleman to the feeling produced by standing near an immense quantity of burning grass.

Were I permitted to deliver an opinion, I should say that Cutch, as a healthy station, has been far overrated, though I doubt not that it is superior to most places in Guzerat.

The longitude of Bhooj is 69° 45′ east; and the latitude 23° 15′ north; the parallel of the tropic of Cancer being presumed to cross the village of Soomrasir on the southern bank of the Runn, fifteen miles north of the cantonment. A reference to the map, therefore, will show, that, with the exception of its extremities, Luckput and

Beyla, the whole province of Cutch is included within the tropics.

Judging from the moderate inclination in the northerly direction towards the Runn, which, from the peculiarities of its annual inundation, can be but little above the level of the ocean, the cantonments of Bhooj cannot be much elevated ; nor is it to be estimated at a greater height than a hundred feet. The Medical Board are aware of the difficulty of ascertaining elevations of this sort by correct experiment, but I can state, that water is found at Bhooj within a few feet from the surface; and on the banks of the Runn within eight or ten feet. The site of the city and residency is somewhat lower than that of the cantonment.

Bhooj is low, in reference to the surrounding country, being situated in an amphitheatre of hills, some of which approach the city within three or four miles, and others within ten or twelve miles. In the middle of the plain, detached from all other high ground, and rising to a height of five hundred feet, is the hill of Bhoojeah, in which the hill-fort is situated, and under the south-west angle of which is the cantonment of the Cutch brigade. The residency is four miles distant, in a westerly direction; and the city of Bhooj about half the distance to the north-west.

The district of Cutch proper, in which Bhooj is situated, is the most unproductive of the whole province; the neighbourhood of the city and can-

tonment being, for nine months in the year, an arid parched plain, with scarcely a blade of vegetation. The traditions of the country relate, that the early princes of Cutch selected this site for their capital city, rather from its being central and convenient for the extirpation of banditti, than from any advantages its neighbourhood offered in the way of cultivation.

The nature of the soil in the immediate neighbourhood of Bhooj is sandy and rocky. The hill of Bhoojeah, which bounds and overlooks the camp in the north-easterly direction, is a barren rock. The water in the cantonments is taken entirely from wells, and is generally brackish. The European officers obtain all they require, for drinking, from a well at the residency,—the only one there, also, which contains very good water. But the natives do not appear to be so particular; nor have I ever heard of any bad effects resulting from the water in the cantonment. After a favourable monsoon, the tank of Bhooj contains a large quantity of this necessary of life, and is the chief dependence of the inhabitants of the city.

There are two rivers in the vicinity of Bhooj; one to the eastward, and another to the westward, of the cantonment. They both pass from the south at a distance of about three miles, and from a junction six miles to the north of the city. Like all the other rivers in Cutch, they scarcely contain any water, except in the rainy season, when they

are very full and rapid, and discharge themselves into the Runn. The beds of both are generally sandy, and the banks precipitous and rocky. It is in one of the branches of these rivers that the Cutch coal is found, seven miles north-east of Bhooj.

There is no marshy ground in the neighbourhood of the cantonment, nor any receptacle for water near it. The large tank of Bhooj beforementioned is a mile distant, and bounds the walls of the city in a westerly direction, extending towards the residency, on some of the compounds of which it borders when it is full. It is above a mile and a-half in circumference after a favourable monsoon, but is generally two-thirds dried up by the beginning of June. The deepest part is under the town walls, so that it dries up from the direction next to the residency, and till lately, left some marshy ground at the bottom of the gardens; but means having been last year adopted to prevent this, the evil no longer exists. The tank is supplied with water from the hills bounding the plain of Bhooj to the south, the rivulets from which unite and form a nulla, which, after passing through the parade ground, and between two of the residency compounds, throws its waters into the tank. The great northern Runn is thirteen or fourteen miles north of Bhooj; and while it is flooded, may be called a marsh for some months in the year, after which it becomes dry and encrusted with salt.

There is scarcely any vegetation or cultivation in the cantonment, there being only one moderately sized inclosure belonging to the commanding-officer, which deserves the name of a garden. It is situated to the extreme left of the camp, so as to be almost beyond it. There are gardens attached to the houses at the residency ; but neither there nor in camp is vegetation or rubbish allowed to accumulate.

The prevailing wind in Cutch is westerly. It is a general remark, that it blows between west and by south, and west and by north, ten months of the year. One month may be allowed for easterly winds, which are always unhealthy, unpleasant to the feeling, attended, if of long continuance, with epidemics and locusts ; and one month to variable winds from different directions. In the sickly season at the end of the rains, the wind is sometimes from the north-east, when the camp of Bhooj has the protection of the hill-fort against it. The monsoon in Cutch sets in generally with great violence from the north-east before it settles in the south-west.

The thermometer in the hot months is often above a hundred. I have seen it a hundred and six degrees at Mandavie in April. In the cold months I have known it fall to forty degrees, and have heard that it was once even at thirty-three degrees.

The atmosphere in Cutch is dry, the gunpowder in the magazines at Bhooj being found to keep better than at most other stations.

Fevers are very prevalent in Cutch at the end of the monsoon. It was calculated last year, that above a third of the inhabitants of Bhooj had attacks of intermittent in October. I have seldom heard of these diseases proving fatal.

In conclusion, there is scarcely a cantonment under the Bombay Presidency, which, in its immediate neighbourhood, is more free from the causes that are understood to generate noxious effluvia and produce disease than the camp of Bhooj. The site of the residency might, no doubt, have been more judiciously chosen than on the borders of the large lake I have described ; but, as far as my observation goes, people living there do not suffer more than those in other situations. Were we to adopt an opinion which I recollect reading some years ago in a volume of the Quarterly Review, that malaria is the product not only of marshes, but also of places where the soil is dry, and the ground elevated in volcanic countries, among which Cutch may be certainly included, it would be easy to account for the insalubrity of the province at particular seasons, without calling in the aid of swamps and other deleterious causes ; but I may be permitted to say, that a far more powerful source of fever than any founded on mere theory or opinion seems to present itself, when we take into consideration the geographical situation of Cutch in reference to the Runn, and the peculiarities of that internal lake ; for the process of evaporation which is going on with its greatest vigour from its surface

at the very period when, as I have mentioned, endemic disease rages at Bhooj. I am aware, that, from experiments which have been instituted in England and Italy, marsh effluvia are not understood by some to travel to so great a distance as fifteen miles from the place of their production; but in tropical countries, where they are much more malignant, and generally diffused, the case may be different; nor can I believe, that the yearly drying up of a surface, exceeding in extent six thousand square miles, can be accomplished without affecting the atmosphere of the neighbouring provinces, and particularly that of Cutch, during the continuance of some days of an easterly wind. I have been led to adopt this opinion, which I submit with diffidence, from having observed in the sickly season of 1825, when fevers and locusts abounded, that the wind was generally from north-east, and, in addition to what I have stated in a preceding paragraph, the apparent cause of both these calamities. I was in Sinde last October, and too unwell during the preceding year, to be able to note with attention the direction of the winds; but I shall take an opportunity of bringing to the notice of the Medical Board the result of my future observations.

THE END.

EDINBURGH:
PRINTED BY JOHN STARK,
Old Assembly Close.

NOTES.—ERRATA.

Visit to Sinde.

P. 69. Marginal reference to the Koran omitted.
P. 80, note, For *Major*, read *Col. Pottinger.*
P. 106. For *Wulle*, read *Wullee*, in the beginning of the bottom paragraph.
P. 112, line 7th, for *hording*, read *hoarding.*
P. 111. The note regarding the present condition of Omerkote would have come in better at p. 119.
P. 114. For *Cade*, read *Quazie.*
P. 123. This note on Tatta should have been at page 129; and there seems some mistake in the reference to a note in the Bombay copy, for none of the notes appear to bear on this part of the text.
P. 129. The note from Crow on the Indus would have been better placed on p. 131, immediately before the Alligators.

History of Cutch.

P. 148. For *Nungalgee*, read *Nungulgee.*
P. 148, last line, *Ubbrassa*, while again, at p. 151, line 3d, it is spelt *Abbrassa*, as it is also at pages 206 and 207.
P. 158. The term Bhyaud means confederated feudal barons forming a defensive brotherhood. It occurs first here.
P. 210 and 225. For *Raydhim*, read *Rahiden.*
P. 211. For *Tukkur*, read *Tucker.*
P. 217. For *failings*, read *feelings.*

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